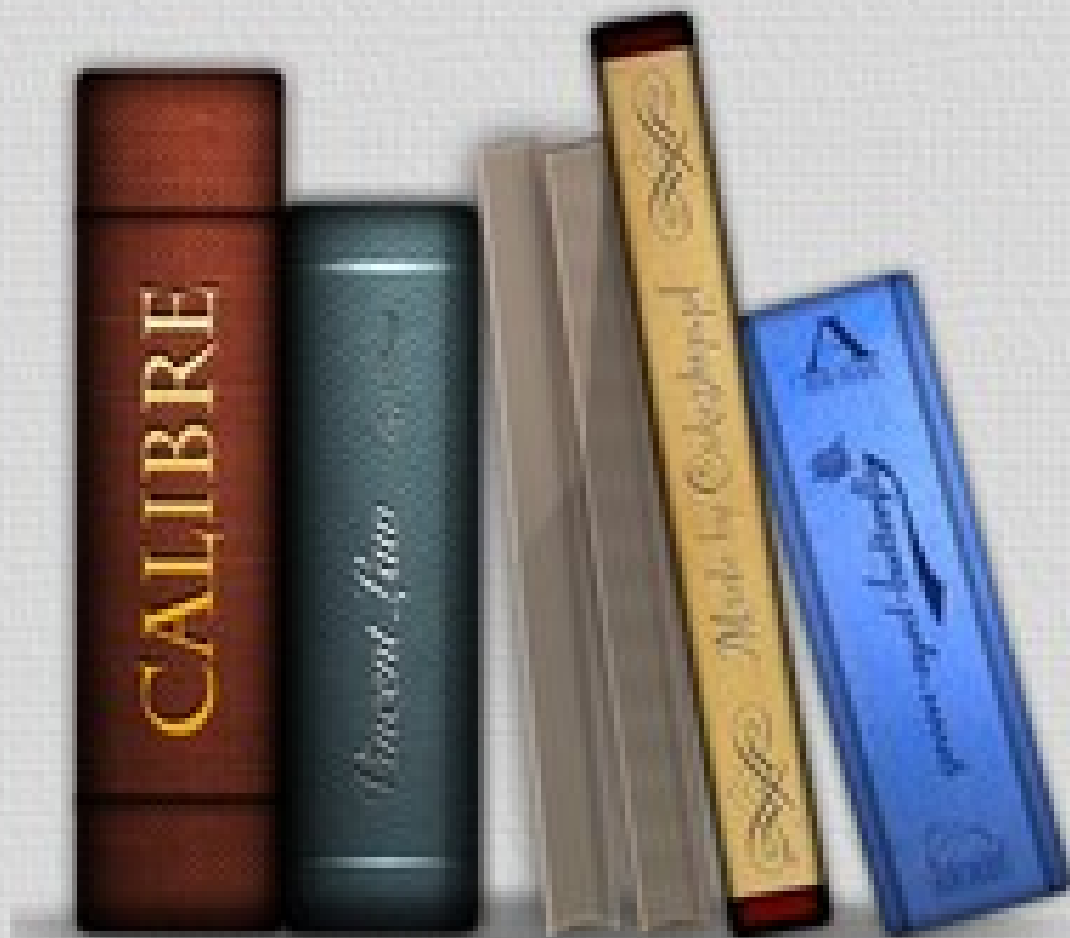


DGuzik 19 Psalms

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(Psa 1:1) Book 1 (Psalms 1 — 41)
Psalm 11

How blessed² is the one³ who does not follow⁴ the advice⁵ of the wicked,⁶ or stand in the pathway⁷ with sinners, or sit in the assembly⁸ of scoffers!⁹

(Guzik)
Psa 1:1-6

Psalms 1 - The Way of the Righteous and the Way of the Ungodly

Verse six presents a key to understanding this Psalm: For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish. In this Psalm, the way of the righteous and the way of the ungodly are contrasted.

A. The way of the righteous.

1. (Psa_1:1) What the righteous man does not do.

Blessed is the man

Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

a. Blessed is the man: Blessed translates the Hebrew word “esher,” which has the idea of happiness or contentment. Esher comes from the Hebrew word ashar, which in its root means “to be straight” or “to be right.” Blessed is the man speaks of the happiness, the blessedness, the contentment in the life of the man or woman who is right or “straight” with God. The righteous man will be a blessed man, a happy man.

i. “Blessed means supremely happy or fulfilled. In fact, in Hebrew the word is actually a plural, which denotes either a multiplicity or blessings or an intensification of them.” (Boice)

ii. “It is not ‘Blessed is the king, blessed is the scholar, blessed is the rich,’ but, ‘Blessed is the man.’ This blessedness is as attainable by the poor, the forgotten and the obscure, as by those whose names figure in history, and are trumpeted by fame.” (Spurgeon)

b. Walks not ... nor stands ... nor sits: The blessed man does not do certain things. There is a way he will not walk, a path he will not stand in, and a seat he will not sit in.

i. We can say these speak of thinking, behaving, and belonging. The righteous man and the ungodly man are different in how they think, how they behave, and to whom they belong.

ii. Others have also seen in this a progression of sin. “The great lesson to be learned from the whole is, sin is progressive; one evil propensity or act leads to another. He who acts by bad counsel may soon do evil deeds; and he who abandons himself to evil doings may end his life in total apostasy from God.” (Clarke)

c. Walks not in the counsel of the ungodly: The ungodly have counsel, and the righteous man will not walk in it. With all the advice that comes to us, from so many different sources, the righteous man knows how to stay away from the counsel of the ungodly.

i. First, it means the righteous man knows how to discern the counsel of the ungodly. Many fail at this point. They do not even consider if counsel is godly or ungodly. They hear advice, or theories about their problems, and they find themselves agreeing or disagreeing without considering, “Is this godly or ungodly counsel.”

ii. The righteous man is also discerning enough to know the counsel of the ungodly can come from one’s own self. Our own conscience, our own mind, our own heart, can give us ungodly counsel.

iii. The righteous man knows where to find completely godly counsel: Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors. (Psa_119:24) God’s Word is always the best counselor, and godly counselors will always bring the truth of God’s Word to help someone who wants counseling.

d. Nor stands in the path of sinners: Sinners have a path where they stand, and the righteous man knows he does not belong on that path. Path speaks of a way, a road, a direction, and the righteous man is not traveling in the same direction as sinners.

i. The righteous man is not afraid to take a less-traveled road, because he knows it leads to blessing, happiness, and eternal life. Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. (Mat_7:13)

ii. The righteous can have the confidence of Psa_16:11 : You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. God has a path, and it is a good road to take.

e. Nor sits in the seat of the scornful: The scornful love to sit and criticize the people of God and the things of God. The righteous man will not sit in that seat!

i. When others are putting down Christians, it is easy to sit with them and criticize them. It is easy because there are many things to criticize among Christians. But it is wrong, because we are then sitting in the seat of the scornful.

ii. Instead, we should be proud to follow Jesus Christ. "Be out-and-out for him; unfurl your colours, never hide them, but nail them to the mast, and say to all who ridicule the saints, 'If you have any ill words for the followers of Christ, pour them out upon me ... but know this - ye shall hear it whether you like it or not, - "I love Christ."'" (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_1:2) What the righteous man does.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

a. His delight is in the law of the Lord: Throughout the Psalms, the phrase law of the Lord is used to describe God's entire word, not only the "law" portion of the first five books of the Bible. The righteous man is delighted with the word of God!

i. What makes you happy? What gets you excited? This is a good way to see what is important to you. If personal pleasure is the only thing that makes you happy, then you are a selfish, self-centered person. If being with your family or friends delights you, that can be better, but it still falls short. The righteous man finds his delight ... in the law of the Lord.

ii. Luther said that he could not live in paradise without the word of God, but he could live well enough in hell with it.

iii. "Man must have some delight, some supreme pleasure. His heart was never meant to be a vacuum. If not filled with the best things, it will be filled with the unworthy and disappointing." (Spurgeon)

iv. If a person delights in something, you don't have to beg them to do it or to like it. They will do it all by themselves. You can measure your delight for the word of God by how much you hunger for it.

b. In His law he meditates day and night: The righteous man ponders the word of God. He does not just hear it and forget it, he thinks about it. Christians should meditate on God's word!

i. In eastern meditation, the goal is to empty the mind. This is dangerous, because an empty mind may present an open invitation to deception or a demonic spirit. But in Christian meditation, the goal is to fill your mind with the word of God. This can be done by carefully thinking about each word and phrase, and applying it one's self and praying it back to the Lord.

ii. "Meditation chews the cud, and gets the sweetness and nutritive virtue of the Word into the heart and life: this is the way the godly bring forth much fruit." (Ashwood, cited by Spurgeon)

iii. Many lack because they only read and do not meditate. "It is not only reading that does us good; but the soul inwardly feeding on it, and digesting it. A preacher once told me that he had read the Bible through twenty times on his knees and had never found the doctrine of election there. Very likely not. It is a most uncomfortable position in which to read. If he had sat in an easy chair he would have been better able to understand it." (Spurgeon)

iv. The righteous man only has God's word on his mind two times a day: day and night. That about covers it all!

3. (Psa_1:3) How the righteous man is blessed.

He shall be like a tree

Planted by the rivers of water,

That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither;

And whatever he does shall prosper.

a. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water: A tree by a river has a continual source of water. It will never wither away, because it is always getting what it needs. If we are constantly needy, it may be worth examining if we are planted by the rivers of water or not.

i. This would also be a tree that is strong and stable, sinking down deep roots. The life of the righteous man is marked by strength and stability.

b. That brings forth its fruit in its season: The righteous man bears fruit, such as the fruit of the Spirit (Gal_5:22-23). The fruit comes naturally from this tree, because it is planted by the rivers of water. It is abiding in a life-source, as Jesus spoke of bearing fruit in Joh_15:5 as we abide in Him. Fruit also has a season. Some get discouraged when they begin to walk as a righteous man, and fruit is not immediately evident. They need to wait until they bring forth fruit in its season.

i. "There are no barren trees in God's orchard, and yet they may have their fits of barrenness, as an apple tree sometimes hath; but they will reflourish with advantage." (Trapp)

c. Whose leaf also shall not wither: Brown, dead, withered leaves are signs of death and dryness. The righteous man does not have these signs of death and dryness; his "leaves" are green and alive.

d. And whatever he does shall prosper: It isn't that the righteous man has a "Midas Touch," and everything he does makes him rich and comfortable. But in the life of the righteous man, God brings forth something good and wonderful out of everything. Even tough circumstances bring forth something that shall prosper.

B. The way of the ungodly.

1. (Psa_1:4) The dangerous place of the ungodly.

The ungodly are not so,

But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

a. The ungodly are not so: Everything true about the righteous man (stable as a tree, continual life and nourishment, fruitful, alive, and prosperous), is not so regarding the ungodly.

i. It may often seem like the ungodly have these things, and sometimes it seems they have them more than the righteous. But it is not so! Any of these things are fleeting in the life of the ungodly;
it can be said that they don't really have them at all.

b. Are like the chaff which the wind drives away: Chaff is the light "shell" around a kernel of grain, which must be stripped away before the kernel of grain can be ground into flour. Chaff was light enough that it could be separated from the grain by throwing a scoopful into the wind and letting the wind drive away the chaff. This is how unstable, how lacking in substance, the ungodly are.

i. Spurgeon on chaff: "Intrinsically worthless, dead, unserviceable, without substance, and easily carried away." There is a huge difference between a tree and chaff.

2. (Psa_1:5) The dangerous future of the ungodly.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

a. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment: Because the ungodly have no "weight," they will be found lacking on the day of judgment. As it was said of King Belshazzar in the book of Daniel, You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting (Dan_5:27).

b. Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous: This is true both in the future, because sinners will not share the same glorious future of the righteous. It is also true in the

present, because sinners sense they do not belong in the congregation of the righteous if they insist on remaining sinners.

3. (Psa_1:6) Summary: The way of the righteous and the way of the ungodly.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

a. The Lord knows the way of the righteous: The righteous can have peace because a loving God in heaven knows their way, and will protect and preserve them.

i. “Or, as the Hebrew has it yet more fully, ‘The Lord is knowing the way of the righteous.’ He is constantly looking on their way, and though it may be often in mist and darkness, yet the Lord knoweth it.” (Spurgeon)

b. The way of the ungodly shall perish: The way of the ungodly leads to destruction. They are on a broad path that may seem comfortable now, and gives them lots of company, but in the end they shall perish.

c. At least four times in the Book of Acts Christianity is called the Way. Certainly, it is the way of the righteous, not the way of the ungodly. Which way are you on?

(Psa 1:2) Instead¹⁰ he finds pleasure in obeying the LORD’s commands;¹¹ he meditates on¹² his commands¹³ day and night.

(Psa 1:3) He is like¹⁴ a tree planted by flowing streams;¹⁵ it¹⁶ yields¹⁷ its fruit at the proper time,¹⁸ and its leaves never fall off.¹⁹ He succeeds in everything he attempts.²⁰

(Psa 1:4) Not so with the wicked!
Instead²¹ they are like wind-driven chaff.²²

(Psa 1:5) For this reason²³ the wicked cannot withstand²⁴
judgment,²⁵ nor can sinners join the assembly of the
godly.²⁶

(Psa 1:6) Certainly²⁷ the LORD guards the way of the
godly,²⁸
but the way of the wicked ends in destruction.²⁹
(Psa 2:1) Psalm 21

Why² do the nations rebel?³
Why⁴ are the countries⁵ devising⁶ plots that will fail?⁷

(Guzik)
Psa 2:1-12

Psalms 2 - The Reign of the LORD's Anointed

Like many Psalms, the theme of Psalms 2 is emphasized in the final verse. We can defy God and perish, or surrender to Him and be blessed. The Psalm itself does not identify its author, but Act_4:25-26 clearly attributes it to David. A. The rage of nations and the laugh of God.

1. (Psa_2:1-3) The nations rebel.

Why do the nations rage,

And the people plot a vain thing?

The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take
counsel together,
Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,

“Let us break Their bonds in pieces

And cast away Their cords from us.”

a. Why do the nations rage: The Psalmist seems genuinely mystified. The nations have no reason to rage against God, and they have no benefit in raging against Him. Their opposition against God is nothing but a vain thing.

b. The rulers take counsel together: Since the time of Babel, men continue to band themselves together against God. They feel that two or more men united against God have a better chance than one man set against God.

c. Against the Lord and against His Anointed: They oppose both the LORD and His Anointed. Anointed speaks of the Christ, the Anointed One. Since Jesus is the perfect representation of the Father (Joh_10:30; Joh_14:9) if you oppose God the Father, you oppose Jesus. If you oppose Jesus, you oppose God the Father.

d. Let us break Their bonds in pieces: Those who oppose the LORD and His Anointed think of God as a bondage-bringer. This attitude is evidence of spiritual insanity because God is a bondage-breaker, not a bondage-bringer.

i. “To a graceless neck the yoke of Christ is intolerable, but to the saved sinner it is easy and light .

. . We may judge ourselves by this, do we love that yoke, or do we wish to cast it from us?” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_2:4-6) The LORD’s laugh from heaven. He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.

Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure:

“Yet I have set My King

On My holy hill of Zion.”

a. He who sits in the heavens shall laugh: God looks at the way man plots against Him and He laughs. God isn't afraid or confused or depressed about the opposition of man. God laughs at it.

i. God laughs because He sits in the heavens. He sits as the Great King on a glorious throne. He isn't pacing back and forth in the throne room of heaven, wondering what He should do next. God sits in perfect peace and assurance.

ii. God laughs because He sits in the heavens. It isn't an earthly throne He occupies; it is the throne of heaven with authority over all creation. What does heaven have to fear from earth?

iii. “God does not tremble. He does not hide behind a vast celestial rampart, counting the enemy and calculating whether or not he has sufficient force to counter this new challenge to his kingdom. He does not even rise from where he is sitting. He simply ‘laughs’ at these great imbeciles.” (Boice)

iv. “This derisive laughter of God is the comfort of all those who love righteousness. It is the laughter of the might of holiness; it is the laughter of the strength of love. God does not exult over the sufferings of sinning me. He does hold in derision all the proud boastings and violence of such as seek to prevent His accomplishment of His will.” (Morgan)

b. The Lord shall hold them in derision: Through the centuries many have opposed God and His

Kingdom in Jesus Christ. Each one of these opponents shall be frustrated and crushed.

i. A famous example of an opponent of Christianity was the Roman Emperor Diocletian (245-313 A.D.). He was such a determined enemy of Christians that he persecuted the church mercilessly, and fancied that he had defeated Christianity. He struck a medal with this inscription: "The name of Christianity being extinguished."

ii. Diocletian also set up two monuments on the frontier of his empire with these inscriptions:

Diocletian Jovian Maximian Herculeus Caesares Augusti for having extended the Roman Empire in the east and the west and for having extinguished the name of Christians who brought the Republic to ruin

Diocletian Jovian Maximian Herculeus Caesares Augusti for having everywhere abolished the superstition of Christ for having extended the worship of the gods

iii. Diocletian is dead and gone, a footnote on the pages of history. The fame and glory of Jesus Christ is spread over all the earth. The Lord shall hold them in derision.

c. He shall speak to them in His wrath: God laughs in heaven, but He doesn't remain inactive. He laughs but He doesn't only laugh. Before He acts against defiant man, He first speaks to them.

i. This shows the great mercy of God. He has every reason and every right to simply act against defiant man. Love and mercy compel God to speak a word of warning before He acts.

d. I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion: God wants defiant man to know that He has established a King. The defiant men closest in view in the Psalm are kings and rulers, and God especially wants them to know there is a King greater than they are. God's King is established (set), and established in Jerusalem (Zion).

B. God's decree to the nations.

1. (Psa_2:7-9) The decree of the Son. "I will declare the decree:

The Lord has said to Me,
'You are My Son,

Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You
The nations for Your inheritance,

And the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall
break them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'"

a. I will declare the decree: The following passage indicates that this is the LORD's Anointed Himself speaking. He will declare the decree that God the Father spoke to Him.

b. You are My Son, today I have begotten You: The LORD's Anointed recalls what God the Father spoke to Him, identifying Him as the Son of the Father and emphasizing His standing as begotten of the Father.

i. The writer to the Hebrews quotes this passage in Heb_1:5 as evidence of the deity of Jesus and superiority to all angels. He mentions the more excellent name Jesus received, greater than all

the angels. This is the “name” Son. While angels are sometimes called the sons of God in a generic sense (Job_1:6), the Father never said “My Son” to any angel in a specific sense. That is reserved for God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity.

ii. Begotten is also an important idea, as a contrast to created. Jesus was not created; rather He created everything that was created (Col_1:16-17). Begotten describes a relationship between two beings of the same essential nature and being, but we create things of a different essential being and nature than ourselves. A man creates a statue but begets a child.

c. I will give You the nations for Your inheritance: The LORD’s Anointed holds the nations as His inheritance. He will rule over all nations and all judgment is committed to Him (Joh_5:22).

i. Rev_11:15 describes an exciting consummation of this inheritance: Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

d. You shall break them with a rod of iron: The LORD’s Anointed has such power over the nations that they are like clay pots that he can shatter with a blow from a rod of iron. This shows why it is so foolish for the nations to defy the LORD and His Anointed. There is no reason and no benefit to their defiant opposition.

2. (Psa_2:10-12) The decree to the nations about the Son. Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little.

Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

a. Be wise, O kings: After the words of warning from the LORD's Anointed, the Psalmist counsels the kings of the earth to give up their foolish defiance of the LORD.

b. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling: The Psalmist calls the kings of the earth to surrender to God, giving Him proper reverence. In this submitted, surrendered place they can rejoice - yet with appropriate trembling.

c. Kiss the Son: This primarily has in mind the kiss of submission, where a dignitary receives the humble kiss of an inferior. It also hints at the affection God wants in relationship to Him. God wants us to recognize our proper place before Him, but to also rejoice in Him and be affectionate in our relationship.

i. "Kissing was the token of subjugation and friendship." (Clarke)

ii. If the kings and judges of the earth are commanded to humble themselves before the LORD's Anointed, recognizing His total superiority, then what of the rest of us? Speaking to the kings and judges therefore includes all of humanity.

d. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him: Those who defy God are broken, but those who depend on Him are blessed. The Psalmist leaves the choice with everyone: Broken or Blessed?

(Psa 2:2) The kings of the earth⁸ form a united front;⁹ the rulers collaborate¹⁰

against the LORD and his anointed king.¹¹

(Psa 2:3) They say,¹² “Let’s tear off the shackles they’ve put on us!¹³

Let’s free ourselves from¹⁴ their ropes!”

(Psa 2:4) The one enthroned¹⁵ in heaven laughs in disgust;¹⁶ the Lord taunts¹⁷ them.

(Psa 2:5) Then he angrily speaks to them and terrifies them in his rage,¹⁸ saying,¹⁹

(Psa 2:6) “I myself²⁰ have installed²¹ my king on Zion, my holy hill.”

(Psa 2:7) The king says,²² “I will announce the LORD’s decree. He said to me:²³

‘You are my son!²⁴ This very day I have become your father!

(Psa 2:8) Ask me,
and I will give you the nations as your inheritance,²⁵ the ends of the earth as your personal property.

(Psa 2:9) You will break them²⁶ with an iron scepter;²⁷ you will smash them like a potter’s jar!’ “²⁸

(Psa 2:10) So now, you kings, do what is wise;²⁹
you rulers of the earth, submit to correction!³⁰

(Psa 2:11) Serve³¹ the LORD in fear!
Repent in terror!³²

(Psa 2:12) Give sincere homage!³³
Otherwise he³⁴ will be angry,³⁵
and you will die because of your behavior,³⁶ when his anger quickly ignites.³⁷

How blessed³⁸ are all who take shelter in him!³⁹
(Psa 3:1) Psalm 31

A psalm of David, written when he fled from his son Absalom.²

LORD, how³ numerous are my enemies! Many attack me.⁴

(Guzik)
Psa 3:1-8

Psalms 3 - Peace in the Midst of the Storm

This is the first Psalm with a title: A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son. James Montgomery Boice points out that since the titles for Psalms are in the canonical text of the Hebrew Bible, “They are to be taken with absolute seriousness throughout.” The events are recorded in 2 Samuel 15-18, but the heart is recorded in this Psalm.

A. David’s trouble and God’s help.

1. (Psa_3:1-2) What those who troubled David did. Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me.

Many are they who say of me,

“There is no help for him in God.” Selah

a. How they have increased who trouble me: At the writing of this Psalm David was in a great deal of trouble. His own son led what seemed to be a successful rebellion against him. Many of his previous friends and associates forsook him and joined the ranks of those who troubled him (2Sa_15:13).

b. There is no help for him in God: David's situation was so bad that man felt he was beyond God's help. Those who said this probably didn't feel that God was unable to help David; they probably felt that God was unwilling to help him. They looked at David's past sin and figured, "This is all what he deserves from God. There is no help for him in God."

i. Shimei was an example of someone who said that God was against David and he was just getting what he deserved (2Sa_16:8). This thought was most painful of all for David - the thought that God might be against him and that there is no help for him in God.

ii. "If all the trials which come from heaven, all the temptations which ascend from hell, and all the crosses which arise from the earth, could be mixed and pressed together, they would not make a trial so terrible as that which is contained in this verse. It is the most bitter of all afflictions to be led to fear that there is no help for us in God." (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_3:3-4) What God did for David in the midst of trouble. But You, O Lord, are a shield for me,
My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

I cried to the Lord with my voice,

And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah

a. You, O Lord, are a shield for me: Though many said there was no help for him in God, David knew that God was his shield. Others - even many others - couldn't shake David's confidence in a God of love and help.

i. Under attack from a cunning and ruthless enemy, David needed a shield. He knew that God

was his shield. This wasn't a prayer asking God to fulfill this; this is a strong declaration of fact:
You, O Lord, are a shield for me.

b. My glory and the One who lifts my head: God was more than David's protection. He also was the one who put David on higher ground, lifting his head and showing him glory. There was nothing glorious or head-lifting in David's circumstances, but there was in his God.

i. Men find glory in all sorts of things - fame, power, prestige, or possessions. David found his glory in the LORD. "Oh, my soul, hast thou made God thy glory? Others boast in their wealth, beauty, position, achievements: dost thou find in God what they find in these?" (Meyer)

c. I cried to the Lord with my voice: "Surely, silent prayers are heard. Yes, but good men often find that, even in secret, they pray better aloud than they do when they utter no vocal sound." (Spurgeon)

d. He heard me from His holy hill: Others said that God wanted nothing to do with David but he could gloriously say, "He heard me." Though Absalom took over Jerusalem and forced David out of the capitol David knew that it wasn't Absalom enthroned on God's holy hill. The LORD Himself still held that ground and would hear and help David from His holy hill.

B. Blessing from and to God.

1. (Psa_3:5-6) God blesses David. I lay down and slept;
I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people

Who have set themselves against me all around.

a. I lay down and slept; I awoke: David used both of these as evidence of God's blessing. Sleep was a blessing, because David was under such intense pressure from the circumstances of Absalom's rebellion that sleep might be impossible, but he slept. Waking was another blessing because many wondered if David would live to see a new day.

i. "Truly it must have been a soft pillow indeed that could make him forget his danger, who then had such a disloyal army at his back hunting of him." (Gurnall, cited in Spurgeon)

ii. God sustains us in our sleep, but we take it for granted. But think of it: you are asleep, unconscious, dead to the world - yet you breathe, your heart pumps, your organs operate. The same God who sustains us in our sleep will sustain us in our difficulties.

b. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people: With God sustaining him, David could stand against any foe. Before it was written God knew the truth of Rom_8:31 : If God is for us, who can be against us?

2. (Psa_3:7-8) David blesses God. Arise, O Lord;
Save me, O my God!

For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You
have broken the teeth of the ungodly.
Salvation belongs to the Lord.

Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

a. Arise, O Lord ... For You have struck all my enemies: David's mind was both on what he trusted God to do (Save me, O my God) and on what God had done (struck all my enemies ... broken the teeth of the ungodly). Knowing what God had done gives David confidence in what the LORD would do.

b. Arise, O Lord: This recalled the words of Num_10:35, where Moses used this phrase as the children of Israel broke camp in the wilderness. It was a military phrase, calling on God to go forth to both defend Israel and lead them to victory.

c. Broken the teeth of the ungodly: This vivid metaphor is also used in Psa_58:6. It speaks of the total domination and defeat of the enemy. David looked for protection in this Psalm, but more than protection - he looked for victory. It wasn't enough for David to survive the threat to the kingdom. He had to be victorious over the threat, and he would with the blessing of God.

d. Salvation belongs to the Lord: David understood that salvation - both in the ultimate and immediate sense - was God's property. It isn't the property of any one nation or sect, but of the LORD God. To be saved, one must deal with the LORD Himself.

e. Your blessing is upon Your people: This showed David's heart in a time of personal calamity. He wasn't only concerned for God's hand upon himself, but upon all God's people. He didn't pray for preservation and victory in the trial with Absalom just for his own sake, but because it was best for the nation.

(Psa 3:2) Many say about me,

“God will not deliver him.”⁵ (Selah)⁶

(Psa 3:3) But you, LORD, are a shield that protects me;⁷ you are my glory⁸ and the one who restores me.⁹

(Psa 3:4) To the LORD I cried out,¹⁰ and he answered me from his holy hill.¹¹ (Selah)

(Psa 3:5) I rested and slept;
I awoke,¹² for the LORD protects¹³ me.

(Psa 3:6) I am not afraid¹⁴ of the multitude of people¹⁵ who attack me from all directions.¹⁶

(Psa 3:7) Rise up,¹⁷ LORD!
Deliver me, my God!
Yes,¹⁸ you will strike¹⁹ all my enemies on the jaw;
you will break the teeth²⁰ of the wicked.²¹

(Psa 3:8) The LORD delivers;²²
you show favor to your people.²³ (Selah)
(Psa 4:1) Psalm 41

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm of David.

When I call out, answer me, O God who vindicates me!²
Though I am hemmed in, you will lead me into a wide, open place.³
Have mercy on me⁴ and respond to⁵ my prayer!

(Guzik)
Psa 4:1-8

Psalms 4 - Talking to God and Men

This Psalm is titled, To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments. A Psalm of David. In it David pours out his complaint against slanderous enemies and finds peace and refuge in God.

A. David talks to God and to men.

1. (Psa_4:1) David talks to God.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress;
Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

a. Hear me when I call: There is passion in David's cry. He doesn't want to just cast up words towards heaven. He needs God's attention to his present problem.

i. Often power in prayer is lacking because there is little passion in prayer. It isn't that we persuade God by emotional displays, but God wants us to care deeply about the things He cares deeply about. The prophet Isaiah spoke with sorrow about the lack of this in Israel: And there is no one who calls on Your name, who stirs himself up to take hold of You (Isa_64:7). This is a good example of David stirring himself up to take hold of God.

b. O God of my righteousness: David knew that his righteousness came from God, and not from himself. He calls upon the God who makes him righteous.

c. You have relieved me ... Have mercy on me: In a familiar pattern, David uses past mercy as a ground for future help. "God, I know you haven't blessed me thus far to abandon me, so have mercy on me."

i. "This is another instance of David's common habit of pleading past mercies as a ground for present favour." (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_4:2-3) David talks to men. How long, O you sons of men,
Will you turn my glory to shame?

How long will you love worthlessness

And seek falsehood? Selah

But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The Lord will hear when I call to Him.

a. How long: David asks a valid question. Just how long will the ungodly keep to their way? They can't keep to it forever, so they may as well abandon it now and be blessed.

i. If we find ourselves on a compromising course, it is valid to ask, "How long? If I extend this course of action out to its logical and inevitable conclusion, where will I be? Knowing this, how long will I play around with this sin?"

b. How long, O you sons of men, will you turn my glory to shame? Many try to connect Psalms 3 with Psalms 4, thinking that this was also written in connection with Absalom's rebellion. This is probably incorrect because the focus in this psalm isn't David's physical safety or kingdom but his reputation. Wicked men slandered David.

i. "In this psalm the problem is one of malicious slander and lies. It is the psalmist's reputation rather than his person that is being attacked." (Boice)

ii. Turn my glory to shame: Jesus experienced what David experienced. Wicked men tried to turn almost every glorious thing in His ministry into shame.

c. The Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly: David knew that he and other godly people were set apart for God. There are many reasons why we set things apart.

- We set things apart for our own enjoyment
- We set things apart for greater purity
- We set things apart for special service

i. For all these reasons and more, God sets us apart unto Himself.

d. The Lord will hear when I call to Him: The ungodly have a disaster waiting for them, but the godly have a great reward in the LORD. This is why David knows the Lord will hear when I call to Him.

i. Each Christian should have the same assurance. They should be confident that God will hear their prayers. When prayer seems ineffective it is worth it to take a spiritual inventory to see if there is a reason for unanswered prayer. The Bible tells us there are many reasons why prayer may not be answered.

- Not abiding in Jesus (Joh_15:7)
- Unbelief (Mat_17:20-21)
- Failure to Fast (Mat_17:21)
- A Bad Marriage Relationship (1Pe_3:7)
- Unconfessed Sin (Jam_5:16)

- Lying and Deceitfulness (Psa_17:1)
 - Lack of Bible Reading and Bible Teaching (Pro_28:9)
 - Trusting in the Length or Form of Prayer (Mat_6:7) B. David talks to himself.
1. (Psa_4:4-5) David calms himself before the Lord. Be angry, and do not sin.
Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And put your trust in the Lord.

a. Be angry, and do not sin: With the ungodliness around him, David had reason to be angry but he had no reason to sin. He reminds himself to not sin in his anger, and to find solace in meditation before the LORD.

b. Meditate within your heart: David speaks of the Christian practice of meditation, not the eastern practice of meditation. In Christian meditation we fill our heart and mind with God's word. In eastern meditation the idea is to empty the heart and mind, leaving it open for deceiving spirits.

c. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord: David knew the value of religious observance (offer the sacrifices), yet he also knew that they could not replace trust in the Lord. When religious observance is coupled with true trust in God, we draw near to God and experience the benefits of drawing near.

2. (Psa_4:6-8) David receives blessing from God.

There are many who say, "Who will show us any good?"
Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.

You have put gladness in my heart,

More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.
I will both lie down in peace, and sleep;
For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

a. Who will show us any good? The voice of the ungodly cynic echoes in David's ear. After continual disappointment from man, one begins to doubt if God will show us any good.

b. Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us: Despite what the cynics say or think, David trusts that the LORD will show him good.

i. He claims it upon the Aaronic promise of blessing in Num_6:24-26 :

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,

And give you peace.

c. You have put gladness in my heart: When we know that the face of God shines favorably on us, it puts gladness in the heart. Though David was in distress, vexed by ungodly men all around he could still have gladness in his heart, because the LORD put it there.

d. More than in the season that their grain and wine increased: The ungodly can be happy when the money is coming in and everything is prosperous. David can be happy even in distressing times because the LORD put gladness in his heart.

e. I will both lie down in peace, and sleep: David can sleep well at night, even in distressing times and surrounded by the ungodly. He sleeps well because his safety is from the LORD, not from circumstances or even feeling.

i. We can imagine a man lying down to sleep, tormented by all of what his enemies or pretended friends say about him. David could be that man, but he trusts in the LORD. He has a gladness that the world can't take away, even with all their slander and lies.

ii. In his proverbs from Poor Richard's Almanac, Ben Franklin had some good advice: "Since I cannot govern my own tongue, tho' within my own teeth, how can I hope to govern the tongues of others?"

f. For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety: G. Campbell Morgan points out that the idea here is not that it is the LORD and none other. Instead, the idea is that David finds safety in solitude with God.

i. "The thought of the word alone is 'in loneliness,' or as Rotherham renders it 'in seclusion'; and the word refers to the one going asleep. This is a glorious conception of sleep. Jehovah gathers the trusting soul into a place of safety by taking it away from all the things which trouble or harass ... the tried and tired child of His love is pavilioned in His peace." (Morgan)

(Psa 4:2) You men,⁶ how long will you try to turn my honor into shame?⁷

How long⁸ will you love what is worthless⁹ and search for what is deceptive?¹⁰ (Selah)

(Psa 4:3) Realize that¹¹ the LORD shows the godly special favor;¹² the LORD responds¹³ when I cry out to him.

(Psa 4:4) Tremble with fear and do not sin!¹⁴
Meditate as you lie in bed, and repent of your ways!¹⁵
(Selah)

(Psa 4:5) Offer the prescribed sacrifices¹⁶ and trust in the LORD!¹⁷

(Psa 4:6) Many say, "Who can show us anything good?"
Smile upon us, LORD!¹⁸

(Psa 4:7) You make me happier¹⁹
than those who have abundant grain and wine.²⁰

(Psa 4:8) I will lie down and sleep peacefully,²¹
for you, LORD, make me safe and secure.²²
(Psa 5:1) Psalm 51

For the music director, to be accompanied by wind instruments;² a psalm of David.

Listen to what I say,³ LORD! Carefully consider my complaint!⁴

(Guzik)
Psa 5:1-12

Psalms 5 - A Morning Prayer

This Psalm carries the title, To the Chief Musician. With flutes. A Psalm of David. It shows David coming to the LORD in the morning and receiving the strength and joy he needs to make it through the day against many adversaries.

A. Approaching God in the morning.

1. (Psa_5:1-3) David approaches God. Give ear to my words,
O Lord, Consider my meditation.
Give heed to the voice of my cry,

My King and my God, For to You I will pray.
My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the
morning I will direct it to You,
And I will look up.

a. Give ear ... consider ... give heed: David longs for an audience with God. Using the Hebrew method of parallelism he repeats the same idea three times: "LORD, please listen to me."

b. For to You I will pray: David prayed to God. This may sound elementary, but it is an essential aspect of prayer. Often we come to prayer so full of our request or our feelings that we never consciously focus on God and sense His presence. David was a great man of prayer because His prayer time was focused on God.

i. "Very much of so-called prayer, both public and private, is not unto God. In order that a prayer should be really unto God, there must be a definite and conscious approach to God when we pray; we must have a definite and vivid realization that God is bending over us and listening as we pray." (Torrey)

c. My voice You shall hear in the morning: David made it a point to pray in the morning. He did this because he wanted to honor God at the beginning of his day, and set the tone for an entire day dedicated unto God.

i. Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary to China, had trouble finding time alone with God. He began to wake himself up at 2:00 in the morning and using those quiet hours when everyone else slept to commune with God.

ii. "What is a slothful sinner to think of himself, when he reads, concerning the holy name of Jesus, that 'in the morning, rising up a great while before the day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed!' - Mar_1:35" (Horne)

iii. "This is the fittest time for intercourse with God. An hour in the morning is worth two in the evening. While the dew is on the grass, let grace drop upon the soul." (Spurgeon)

d. In the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up: David gives us what to do before and after prayer. Before we pray, we should direct our prayer. After we pray, we look up with expectancy to heaven, really believing that God will answer.

i. The idea behind direct is not "to aim" but "to order, to arrange." "It is the word that is used for the laying in order of the wood and pieces of the victim upon the altar, and it is used also for the putting of the shewbread upon the table. It means just this: 'I will arrange my prayer before thee;' I will lay it out upon the altar in the morning, just as the priest lays out the morning sacrifice." (Spurgeon)

ii. "It is manifestly a mistake to pray at haphazard. There is too much random praying with us all. We do not return again and again to the same petition, pressing it home with all humility and reverence, and arguing the case, as Abraham did his for the cities of the plain." (Meyer)

iii. “Do we not miss very much of the sweetness and efficacy of prayer by a want of careful meditation before it, and of hopeful expectation after it? Let holy preparation link hands with patient expectation, and we shall have far larger answers to our prayers.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_5:4-8) A contrast between the wicked man and the godly man. For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness,
Nor shall evil dwell with You.

The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity.

You shall destroy those who speak falsehood;

The Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.

Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; Make Your way straight before my face.

a. You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness: David meditates on the righteous character of God. Our actions matter before a God who hates all workers of iniquity.

i. As David drew closer to God he became more aware of God’s holiness and man’s sinfulness. “This is a good way to measure how well you are praying and whether, as you pray, you are drawing close to God or are merely mouthing words. If you are drawing close to God, you will become increasingly sensitive to sin, which is inevitable since the God you are approaching is a holy God.” (Boice)

b. I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy: This is David's confidence. It isn't that he is righteous and all others are sinners; his ground of confidence is the mercy of God.

c. In fear of You I will worship: David's worship isn't based on his feelings, but on his reverence for a righteous, merciful God.

d. Make Your way straight before my face: This reflects David's constant reliance on God. He needs God to lead him and to make the way straight. David's contrast between the wicked and the godly is humble, and he knows it is only God's power and work in him that can keep him from the way of the wicked.

B. Description and destiny.

1. (Psa_5:9-10) The description and destiny of the wicked.
For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; Their inward part is destruction;
Their throat is an open tomb; They flatter with their tongue.
Pronounce them guilty, O God!
Let them fall by their own counsels;

Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, For they have rebelled against You.

a. There is no faithfulness in their mouth: David focuses on what the wicked say as evidence of their wickedness. David knew what Jesus said later in Mat_12:34 : Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Our righteousness or wickedness will sooner or later show up in our speech.

i. David felt the sting of wicked words and lies against him. Yet this prayer shows something good brought out of the

attacks from the enemy. "Thus a man's enemies, while they oblige him to pray more fervently, and to watch more narrowly over his conduct, oftentimes become his best friends." (Horne)

b. They flatter with their tongue: "Always beware of people who flatter you, and especially when they tell you that they do not flatter you, and that they know you cannot endure flattery, for you are then being most fulsomely flattered, so be on your guard against the tongue of the flatterer." (Spurgeon)

c. Let them fall by their own counsels: David prays that the wicked will come to their deserved end. As rebels against God, they deserve the "guilty" sentence.

2. (Psa_5:11-12) The description and destiny of the righteous. But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You.

For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous;

With favor You will surround him as with a shield.

a. Let all those rejoice who put their trust in You: The righteous aren't made righteous by their words. The righteousness are those who trust the LORD and love His name. But their righteousness is evident in their words. They rejoice, they shout for joy, and they are joyful in the LORD.

i. "A touch of enthusiasm would be the salvation of many a man's religion. Some Christians are good enough people: they are like wax candles, but they are not lighted. Oh, for a

touch of flame! Then would they scatter light, and thus become of service to their families. 'Let them shout for joy.' Why not? Let not orderly folks object. One said to me the other day, 'When I hear you preach I feel as if I must have a shout!' My friend, shout if you feel forced to do so. (Here a hearer cried,

'Glory!') Our brother cries, 'Glory!' and I say so too. 'Glory!' The shouting need not always be

done in a public service, or it might hinder devout hearing; but there are times and places where a glorious outburst of enthusiastic joy would quicken life in all around. The ungodly are not half so restrained in their blasphemy as we are in our praise." (Spurgeon)

b. But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You: This is a permit, a precept, a prayer, and a promise. i. You have permission for joy. "You have here a ticket to the banquets of joy. You may be as

happy as ever you like. You have divine permission to shout for joy." (Spurgeon)

ii. You have a precept, a command for joy: "Come, ye mournful ones, be glad. Ye discontented grumblers, come out of that dog-hole! Enter the palace of the King! Quit your dunghills; ascend your thrones." (Spurgeon)

iii. You should pray for joy, both in yourself and others - especially servants of the LORD. "If you lose your joy in your religion, you will be a poor worker: you cannot bear strong testimony, you cannot bear stern trial, you cannot lead a powerful life. In proportion as you maintain your joy, you will be strong in the Lord, and for the Lord." (Spurgeon)

iv. You have a promise for joy: "God promises joy and gladness to believers. Light is sown for them: the Lord will turn their night into day." (Spurgeon)

c. You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; with favor You will surround him: This is the greatest blessing of all - the favor of God. Knowing that God looks on us with favor and pleasure is the greatest knowledge in the world. This is our standing in grace.

i. A shield does not protect any one area of the body. It is large and mobile enough to cover any and every area of the body. It is armor over armor. This is how fully the favor of God, our standing in grace, protects us.

ii. When Martin Luther was on his way to face a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church to answer for what they said were his heretical teachings, one of the Cardinal's servants taunted him saying, "Where will you find shelter if your patron, the Elector of Saxony, should desert you?" Luther answered, "Under the shelter of heaven."

(Psa 5:2) Pay attention to my cry for help, my king and my God,
for I am praying to you!

(Psa 5:3) LORD, in the morning⁵ you will hear⁶ me;⁷
in the morning I will present my case to you⁸ and then wait expectantly for an answer.⁹

(Psa 5:4) Certainly¹⁰ you are not a God who approves of evil;¹¹ evil people¹² cannot dwell with you.¹³

(Psa 5:5) Arrogant people cannot stand in your presence;¹⁴ you hate¹⁵ all who behave wickedly.¹⁶

(Psa 5:6) You destroy¹⁷ liars;¹⁸
the LORD despises¹⁹ violent and deceitful people.²⁰

(Psa 5:7) But as for me,²¹ because of your great faithfulness
I will enter your house;²²
I will bow down toward your holy temple as I worship you.²³

(Psa 5:8) LORD, lead me in your righteousness²⁴ because of
those who wait to ambush me,²⁵
remove the obstacles in the way in which you are guiding
me!²⁶

(Psa 5:9) For²⁷ they do not speak the truth;²⁸
their stomachs are like the place of destruction,²⁹ their
throats like an open grave,³⁰
their tongues like a steep slope leading into it.³¹ (Psa 5:10)
Condemn them,³² O God!
May their own schemes be their downfall!³³
Drive them away³⁴ because of their many acts of
insurrection,³⁵ for they have rebelled against you.

(Psa 5:11) But may all who take shelter³⁶ in you be
happy!³⁷
May they continually³⁸ shout for joy!³⁹
Shelter them⁴⁰ so that those who are loyal to you⁴¹ may
rejoice!⁴²

(Psa 5:12) Certainly⁴³ you reward⁴⁴ the godly,⁴⁵ LORD.
Like a shield you protect⁴⁶ them⁴⁷ in your good favor.⁴⁸
(Psa 6:1) Psalm 61

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed
instruments, according to the sheminith style;² a psalm of
David.

LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger! Do not discipline me
in your raging fury!³

(Guzik)

Psa 6:1-10

Psalms 6 - A Confident Answer to an Agonized Plea

Psalms 6 is known as the first of seven penitential psalms - songs of confession and humility before God. It was a custom in the early church to sing these psalms on Ash Wednesday, the Wednesday before Easter. The title of this Psalm is, To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments. On an eight-stringed harp. A Psalm of David.

A. The agonized plea.

1. (Psa_6:1) A plea to lighten the chastening hand. O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger,
Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure.

a. Do not rebuke me in Your anger: We don't know what the occasion of sin was, but because of his sin David sensed he was under the rebuke of God. Therefore he called out to God to lighten the chastisement.

i. There may be times when we believe we are chastened by God's hand when really we suffer trouble brought upon ourselves. Nevertheless, there are certainly times when the LORD does chasten His children.

b. Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure: We know that God's chastening hand is not primarily a mark of His displeasure, but it is a mark of adoption. Heb_12:7 makes it clear that chastening is evidence of our adoption: If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? When God corrects us it doesn't feel pleasant, but it is good and for our good.

i. Anger ... hot displeasure: Living before the finished work of Jesus, David had less certainty about his standing with God. On this side of the cross we know that all the anger God has towards us was poured out on Jesus at the cross. God chastens the believer out of correcting love and not out of anger.

2. (Psa_6:2-3) Two kinds of trouble.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled; But You, O Lord; how long?

a. I am weak ... my bones are troubled: David knew the trial of physical weakness and pain. In the midst of this kind of chastisement, he cries out to God for mercy.

i. "So we may pray that the chastisements of our gracious God, if they may not be entirely removed, may at least be sweetened by the consciousness that they are 'not in anger, but in his dear covenant love.' " (Spurgeon)

b. My soul also is greatly troubled: David knew the trial of spiritual weakness and pain. The difficulty of these trials drove David to seek mercy from God.

i. These trials of body and soul were amplified by David's sense of God's anger against him. When we are not confident in God's love and assistance even small trials feel unbearable.

c. How long? David sensed he was under the chastisement of God, but he still knew he should ask God to shorten the trial. There is a place for humble resignation to chastisement, but God wants us to yearn for higher ground

and to use that yearning as a motivation to seek Him and get things right with the LORD.

i. David seems to smart under the result of his sin, more than the sin itself. Ideally we are all terribly grieved by sin itself, but there is something to be said for confession and humility for the sake of the result of our sins.

3. (Psa_6:4-5) The urgency of David's plea. Return, O Lord, deliver me!

Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake!

For in death there is no remembrance of You; In the grave who will give You thanks?

a. Return, O Lord, deliver me: In his agony David pleads for deliverance - but on the ground of God's mercy, not his own righteousness. David knew that the LORD's chastisement was righteous, but he also knew that God is rich in mercy.

i. The plea, "return" also shows that David felt distant from God. This was part of the agony of the trial. When we sense God is near us we feel that we can face anything, but when we sense Him distant from us we are weak before the smallest trial.

b. Save me for Your mercies' sake: The note of confession of sin is not strong in this Psalm of Penitence, but it is not absent. The fact that David appeals to the mercy of God for deliverance is evidence that he is aware that he doesn't deserve it.

i. "David's conscience is uneasy, and he must appeal to grace to temper the discipline he deserves." (Kidner)

c. In death there is no remembrance of You: It would be wrong to take these agonized words of David as evidence that there is no life beyond this life. The Old Testament has a shadowy understanding of the world beyond. Sometimes it shows a clear confidence (Job_19:25), and sometimes it has the uncertainty David shows here.

i. "Churchyards are silent places; the vaults of the sepulcher echo not with songs. Damp earth covers dumb mouths."
(Spurgeon)

ii. 2Ti_2:10 says that Jesus brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. The understanding of the afterlife was murky at best in the Old Testament; but Jesus let us know more about heaven and hell than anyone else could. Jesus could do this because He had first-hand knowledge of the world beyond.

iii. David's point isn't to present a comprehensive theology of the world beyond. He is in agony, fearing for his life, and he knows he can remember God and give Him thanks now. He doesn't have the same certainty about the world beyond, so he asks God to act according to his certainty.

iv. "At rare moments the Psalms have glimpses of rescue from Sheol, in terms that suggest resurrection, or a translation like that of Enoch or Elijah (c.f. Psa_16:10; Psa_17:15; Psa_49:15; Psa_73:24)." (Kidner)

B. The determined resolution.

1. (Psa_6:6-7) A vivid description of David's agony. I am weary with my groaning;
All night I make my bed swim;

I drench my couch with my tears.

My eye wastes away because of grief;

It grows old because of all my enemies.

a. I am weary with groaning: God's chastising hand was heavy upon David. His life seemed to be nothing but tears and misery. David's trial has at least three components: He felt God was angry with him, he lacked a sense of God's presence, and he couldn't sleep.

b. All night I make my bed swim: This is a good example of poetic exaggeration. David didn't want us to believe that his bed actually floated on a pool of tears in his room. Because this is poetic literature we understand it according to its literary context. This understands the Bible literally - according to its literary context.

c. My eye wastes away: David's eyes were red and sore from all the tears and lack of sleep. "As an old man's eye grows dim with years, so says David, my eye is grown red and feeble through weeping." (Spurgeon)

d. Because of all my enemies: David is brought so low that his enemies no longer spur him to seize victory. He seems depressed and discouraged.

2. (Psa_6:8-10) David's confident declaration. Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity;
For the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping.

The Lord has heard my supplication; The Lord will receive my prayer.

Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled;

Let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly.

a. Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity: It may be that the sin that led David into this chastisement was association with the ungodly. Here we see David acting consistently with his change of heart, and telling all ungodly associates to depart.

i. It is important to separate from ungodly associations. J. Edwin Orr describes some of the work among new converts in Halifax during the Second Great Awakening in Britain: "Among them was a boxer who had just won a money-prize and a belt. A crowd of his erstwhile companions stood outside the hall in order to ridicule him, and they hailed the converted boxer with a shout: 'He's getting' converted! What about that belt? Tha'll either have to fight for it or give it up!' The boxer retorted: 'I'll both give it up and you up! If you won't go with me to heaven, I won't go with you to hell!' He gave them the belt, but persuaded some of them to accompany him to the services, where another was converted and set busily working."

b. The Lord has heard the voice of my weeping: David ends the Psalm on a note of confidence. He made his agonized cry to God, and God heard him.

i. Weeping has a voice before God. It isn't that God is impressed by emotional displays, but a passionate heart impresses Him. David wasn't afraid to cry before the LORD, and God honored the voice of his weeping.

ii. "Is it not sweet to believe that our tears are understood even when words fail! Let us learn to think of tears as liquid prayers." (Spurgeon)

iii. Once Luther wrestled hard with God in prayer and came jumping out of his prayer closet crying out, "Vicimus,

vicimus” - that is, “Victory, victory!” David has the same sense of prevailing with God at the end of this prayer.

c. Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled: David knows that when God receives his prayer, it will be trouble for his enemy. David now sees that his temporary agony and trouble gives way to a permanent agony and trouble for his enemies.

(Psa 6:2) Have mercy on me,⁴ LORD, for I am frail!
Heal me, LORD, for my bones are shaking!⁵

(Psa 6:3) I am absolutely terrified,⁶
and you, LORD — how long will this continue?⁷

(Psa 6:4) Relent, LORD, rescue me!⁸
Deliver me because of your faithfulness!⁹

(Psa 6:5) For no one remembers you in the realm of death,¹⁰
In Sheol who gives you thanks?¹¹

(Psa 6:6) I am exhausted as I groan;
all night long I drench my bed in tears;¹²
my tears saturate the cushion beneath me.¹³

(Psa 6:7) My eyes¹⁴ grow dim¹⁵ from suffering;
they grow weak¹⁶ because of all my enemies.¹⁷

(Psa 6:8) Turn back from me, all you who behave wickedly,¹⁸ for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping!¹⁹

(Psa 6:9) The LORD has heard my appeal for mercy;
the LORD has accepted²⁰ my prayer.

(Psa 6:10) May all my enemies be humiliated²¹ and absolutely terrified!²²

May they turn back and be suddenly humiliated!

(Psa 7:1) Psalm 71

A musical composition² by David, which he sang to the LORD concerning³ a Benjaminite named Cush.⁴

O LORD my God, in you I have taken shelter.⁵
Deliver me from all who chase me! Rescue me!

(Guzik)

Psa 7:1-17

Psalms 7 - Confidence in God's Deliverance

The Hebrew title to this Psalm reads: A Meditation of David, which he sang to the Lord concerning the words of Cush, a Benjaminite. The New King James version translates the Hebrew word "Shiggaion" as meditation, though the word is difficult to translate and is used elsewhere only in Hab_3:1. The specific occasion is not easily connected with an event recorded in the historical books of the Old Testament; it may be a veiled reference to either Shimei's accusations against David in 2Sa_16:5 or to Saul's slanders against David. More likely this Cush, a Benjaminite was simply another partisan of Saul against David. The Psalm contains both David's cry of anguish and confidence in God's deliverance.

A. David pleads for deliverance.

1. (Psa_7:1-2) A trust-filled plea.

O Lord my God, in You I put my trust; Save me from all those who persecute me; And deliver me,

Lest they tear me like a lion,

Rending me in pieces, while there is none to deliver.

a. In You I put my trust: When David was under attack from Cush the Benjamite, all he could trust was God. Every other support was gone, but he needed no other support.

i. “Nothing is known of Cush; but from Abasalom’s rebellion it emerged that Benjamin, Saul’s tribe, held some bitter enemies of David (2Sa_16:5 ff; 2Sa_20:1 ff).” (Kidner)

ii. “It is easy to understand how the slander described in the psalm could have emerged from the smoldering hostility of this tribe.” (Boice)

iii. Some believe that this Cush was really Saul or Shimei. “Cush has been supposed to be Shimei or Saul himself, and to have been so called because of his swarthy complexion (Cush meaning African) or as a jest, because of his personal beauty.” (Maclaren)

b. And deliver me: Sometimes God’s strength is evident in helping through a trial. Other times it is evident in delivering us from trials. David was persuaded that God wanted to deliver him from this trial.

i. To be slandered is a severe trial. “It appears probable that Cush the Benjamite had accused David to Saul of treasonable conspiracy against his royal authority. This the king would be ready enough to credit, both from his jealousy of David, and from the relation which most probably existed between himself, the son of Kish, and this Cush, or Kish, the Benjamite... . This may be called the SONG OF THE SLANDERED SAINT.” (Spurgeon)

c. Lest they tear me like a lion: David believed there would be grave consequences if he were not delivered from these lion-like enemies.

i. This understanding gave David urgency in prayer. God sometimes allows difficult circumstances so they will awaken this urgency in us.

ii. "It will be well for us here to remember that this is a description of the danger to which the Psalmist was exposed from slanderous tongues. Verily this is not an overdrawn picture, for the wounds of a sword will heal, but the wounds of the tongue cut deeper than the flesh, and are not soon cured." (Spurgeon)

iii. David also knew what it was like to overcome a lion. "The metaphor of the lion is common in the psalms attributed to David, and is, at all events, natural in the mouth of a shepherd king, who had taken a lion by the beard." (Maclaren)

2. (Psa_7:3-5) The plea of innocence. O Lord my God, if I have done this:
If there is iniquity in my hands,

If I have repaid evil to him who was at peace with me, Or
have plundered my enemy without cause,
Let the enemy pursue me and overtake me; Yes, let him
trample my life to the earth, And lay my honor in the dust.
Selah

a. If there is iniquity in my hands: With these words, David did not claim sinless perfection. Instead, he simply rejected the idea of moral equivalence between himself and his enemies.

i. "Although David expressing himself as perhaps we would not, his words do not mean that he is perfect, only that he is innocent of the crime of which he was charged... The question is not whether David was morally perfect but whether he was innocent of this particular slander." (Boice)

ii. "From the Psalm we learn the nature of the charges, which he made against David. They were: that he had appropriated spoils which rightly belonged to the king; that he had returned evil for good; and that he had taken toll for some generosity." (Morgan)

b. Lest the enemy pursue me and overtake me: David knew that his enemies were thirsty for his defeat. He was so confident in his righteousness in comparison to his enemies that he was willing to be given over to their desire if they were in the right.

B. The righteous judgment of God.

1. (Psa_7:6-7) A plea for God's righteous intervention. Arise, O Lord, in Your anger;
Lift Yourself up because of the rage of my enemies;

Rise up for me to the judgment You have commanded! So the congregation of the peoples shall surround You; For their sakes, therefore, return on high.

a. Arise, O Lord, in Your anger: David believed that God was a being of human-like passions such as anger. David also believed that the passions of God were on his behalf; he believed God was or would be angry for him instead of against him.

i. It is a mistake to believe that God is without passions. Because He is God we can say that these passions are not exactly like their human counterparts; yet they are certainly

somewhat like them. God is not cold, distant, and dispassionate.

ii. Yet it is also a mistake to assume that the passions of God are always with us or support our opinion. Many dangerous fanatics have been wrongly inspired by the mistaken assurance that God was for them when He was not.

b. Lift Yourself up ... rise up for me: David believed that God was for him and his cause; yet he did not hold this belief passively. He actively prayed for the accomplishing of what he believed God's will to be.

c. For their sakes, therefore, return on high: David's prayer for protection and vindication was not fundamentally selfish. He knew that his fate was vitally connected to the welfare of God's people. It was in large measure for their sakes, the sake of the congregation.

2. (Psa_7:8-10) David's defense. The Lord shall judge the peoples;

Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, And according to my integrity within me.

Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end,

But establish the just;

For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds. My defense is of God,

Who saves the upright in heart.

a. The Lord shall judge the peoples; judge me, O Lord: This was the attitude that protected David from presumption. He honestly invited God's judgement and correction.

i. Therefore, David asked for God's blessing according to my righteousness, and according to my integrity within me. In

effect he prayed, "Lord, to the extent that I am righteous before You, then bless me and protect me from my enemies."

ii. When David longed for justice, it isn't that He wanted ultimate and perfect judgment before God; he looks for justice on the earthly level, justice between him and his false accuser.

b. Let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just: This reveals more of the heart of David's prayer. More than anything he prayed for God to be just. In this sense David did not pray for special favoritism with God; he prayed for God to be just and he searched his own heart to help put him in the right before God.

i. David seemed to pray here beyond his own personal needs. "There is a great breadth of vision here, revealing a concern for universal justice which was always the motive behind David's personal appeals for vindication." (Kidner)

c. My defense is of God: David knew he was at a significant disadvantage before his enemies and had to rely on the defense that is of God.

i. With his trust in God, David did "Throw off slanders, as Paul did the viper; yea, in a holy scorning, it laughs at them." (Trapp)

3. (Psa_7:11-13) God, the just judge. God is a just judge,
And God is angry with the wicked every day. If he does not
turn back,
He will sharpen His sword;
He bends His bow and makes it ready.

He also prepares for Himself instruments of death; He makes
His arrows into fiery shafts.

a. God is a just judge: David's prior appeal to God's testing of man (Psa_7:9) made him think of the justice of God. He declared this fundamental principle: God is a just judge.

i. This is a commonly and dangerously rejected truth about God. Many anticipate that they will one day stand before a God of great love, great mercy, great warmth, and great generosity. They never imagine they will stand before a God who is perfectly just and who cannot ignore the crime of sin.

ii. We can say that sin is a crime; that it breaks the good and holy law of God. And while all sins are not equally sinful (some sins are worse than others and will receive a greater condemnation, Mat_23:14), yet there are no small sins against a great God.

iii. The justice of God is easy to understand if we simply compare to what we expect from an earthly judge. We don't think it is right or good if a human judge excuses crime in the name of compassion; we expect judges to be just. Yet many are absolutely confident that God will be an unjust judge on the Day of Judgment. They are so confident of it that they mistakenly rely on this idea for their salvation. David knew the truth: God is a just judge.

b. He is angry with the wicked every day: Adam Clarke believed a more accurate translation of Psa_7:11 is, "He is NOT angry every day." He writes: "The mass of evidence supports the latter reading. The Chaldee first corrupted the text by making the addition, with the wicked, which our translators have followed."

i. If the original is taken as more correct the, "The sense seems to be, that there are daily instances in the world of God's favour toward his people; as also of his displeasure

against the ungodly, who are frequently visited by sore judgments, and taken away in their sins.” (Horne)

c. He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready: David here considered the readiness of God to judge the sinner. David saw the sword sharpened and the bow bent. With God so ready to judge, the sinner should never presume that God will delay His judgment.

i. This is another fatal error made by many who see God delaying deserved judgment out of mercy and mistake it for the idea that God is not concerned with justice.

ii. Instead, one should ask: Why does God hold back the immediate application of justice? Is it because:

- The sinner is not really guilty?
- The Law is not really clear?
- Mankind in fact deserves such mercy?
- God is not really powerful enough to bring justice?
- God is not really just?

iii. None of these are true. Instead, the sword is sharpened and the bow is bent. The only thing that holds back the immediate judgment of God against the sinner is the undeserved mercy of God, giving the sinner an unknown period of time to repent. Such mercy should never be presumed upon. “Did I say, he will do it? Nay, he hath already done it; his sword is drawn, his bow is bent, and the arrows are prepared and ready to be shot.” (Poole)

iv. "The clause in Psa_7:12 a, If a man does not repent, reveals what God was waiting for when He seemed merely dilatory." (Kidner)

d. Instruments of death ... arrows into fiery shafts: This powerful poetic imagery communicates the severity of God's judgment, hopefully providing another incentive to repentance.

i. "The wrath of God may be slow, but it is always sure. In thoughtless security man wantons and wastes away the precious hours; he knows not that every transgression sets a fresh edge on the sword, which is thus continually whetting for his destruction." (Horne)

C. The resolution of the matter.

1. (Psa_7:14) The wickedness of the wicked. Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity;
Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood.

a. Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity: This seemingly obvious statement is important. It shows that a wicked heart will show itself in wicked deeds.

i. Those wicked deeds may have the cover of respectability but will nonetheless be filled with iniquity (as was the case with the Pharisees of Jesus' day).

b. He conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood: This shows the source of sin - from within the sinner. The sinner gives birth to sin as a mother gives birth to children - from within.

2. (Psa_7:15-16) God deals with the wicked. He made a pit and dug it out,

And has fallen into the ditch which he made. His trouble shall return upon his own head,
And his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.

a. Fallen into the ditch which he made: This shows a common method of God's distribution of justice. He often brings the same calamity on the wicked that they had planned for the righteous.

i. "God is righteous. The way of the wickedness cannot prosper. It creates its own destruction. The pit digged is the grave of the man who digs it." (Morgan)

ii. "This is but the highly metaphorical way of saying that a sinner never does what he means to do, but that at the end of all his plans is disappointment." (Maclaren)

b. His violent dealing shall come down on his own crown: Two examples among many in the Bible are the fate of Haman the enemy of Mordecai and the Jews, and the enemies of Daniel in the lion's den.

i. "Dives, that wasted so many tuns of wine, cannot now procure water, not a pot of water, not a handful of water, not a drop of water, to cool his tongue... A just recompense! He would not give a crumb; he shall not have a drop." (Spurgeon)

3. (Psa_7:17) The response of praise.

I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, And will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.

a. I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness: David was wise enough to praise God according to His righteousness and not his own.

i. Though David appealed to God in this Psalm on the basis of his comparative goodness, this was not a self-righteous prayer. David knew the difference between his relative righteousness and God's praiseworthy perfect righteousness.

b. And will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High: David ended this Psalm - which began in gloom - on a high note of praise. He could praise because he took his cause to God and in faith left it there.

(Psa 7:2) Otherwise they will rip⁶ me⁷ to shreds like a lion; they will tear me to bits and no one will be able to rescue me.⁸

(Psa 7:3) O LORD my God, if I have done what they say,⁹ or am guilty of unjust actions,¹⁰

(Psa 7:4) or have wronged my ally,¹¹ or helped his lawless enemy,¹²

(Psa 7:5) may an enemy relentlessly chase¹³ me¹⁴ and catch me;¹⁵ may he trample me to death¹⁶ and leave me lying dishonored in the dust.¹⁷ (Selah)

(Psa 7:6) Stand up angrily,¹⁸ LORD!
Rise up with raging fury against my enemies!¹⁹
Wake up for my sake and execute the judgment you have decreed for them!²⁰

(Psa 7:7) The countries are assembled all around you;²¹ take once more your rightful place over them!²²

(Psa 7:8) The LORD judges the nations.²³
Vindicate me, LORD, because I am innocent,²⁴ because I am blameless,²⁵ O Exalted One!²⁶

(Psa 7:9) May the evil deeds of the wicked²⁷ come to an end!²⁸

But make the innocent²⁹ secure,³⁰

O righteous God,

you who examine³¹ inner thoughts and motives!³²

(Psa 7:10) The Exalted God is my shield,³³

the one who delivers the morally upright.³⁴

(Psa 7:11) God is a just judge;

he is angry throughout the day.³⁵

(Psa 7:12) If a person³⁶ does not repent, God sharpens his sword³⁷ and prepares to shoot his bow.³⁸

(Psa 7:13) He prepares to use deadly weapons against him;³⁹ he gets ready to shoot flaming arrows.⁴⁰

(Psa 7:14) See the one who is pregnant with wickedness, who conceives destructive plans, and gives birth to harmful lies — 41

(Psa 7:15) he digs a pit⁴²

and then falls into the hole he has made.⁴³

(Psa 7:16) He becomes the victim of his own destructive plans⁴⁴

and the violence he intended for others falls on his own head.⁴⁵

(Psa 7:17) I will thank the LORD for⁴⁶ his justice;

I will sing praises to the sovereign LORD!⁴⁷

(Psa 8:1) Psalm 81

For the music director, according to the gittith style;² a psalm of David.

O LORD, our Lord,³
how magnificent⁴ is your reputation⁵ throughout the earth!
You reveal your majesty in the heavens above!⁶

(Guzik)
Psa 8:1-9

Psalms 8 - The Glory of God in Creation

The title of this Psalm reads, To the Chief Musician. On the instrument of Gath. A Psalm of David. It indicates the audience of the Psalm (the Chief Musician), the author of the Psalm (of David) and the sound of the Psalm (the instrument of Gath). In this Psalm David speaks of the glory of God, and how the glory of man and his destiny reflects upon God.

A. The plainly seen glory of creation.

1. (Psa_8:1) The glory of God in the earth and the heavens.
O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth,

Who have set Your glory above the heavens!

a. O Lord, our Lord: Here David recognized both the covenant name of God (Lord) and the position of Yahweh to His people (Lord). It was a simple, straightforward, and common way of saying that “Our God is our Master.”

i. “Yehovah Adoneynu; O Jehovah our Prop, our Stay, or Support... . The root dan signifies to direct, rule, judge, support. So Adonai is the Director, Ruler, Judge, Supporter of men.” (Clarke)

b. How excellent is Your name in all the earth: David also recognized that though the LORD was Israel’s covenant God,

He was also God of more than just Israel. His name is excellent ... in all the earth.

c. Who have set Your glory above the heavens: At the same time, the earth was not enough to measure the glory and excellence of God. His glory is above the heavens.

2. (Psa_8:2) The glory of God in His strength over His enemies. Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

a. Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength: In the first verse David considered the greatness of God by His evident power and glory in creation, both across the earth and in the heavens. Now he considers that the power and glory of God can be seen in small children – babes and nursing infants – as God's strength is evident in them.

i. David here touched on a familiar theme in the Bible; the idea that God uses otherwise weak things to display His glory and strength. 1Co_1:27 is an example of this idea: But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty.

ii. It is hard to think of anything more weak and helpless than a baby; yet the same God who can ordain strength out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants can give strength and support to me in the midst of my weakness.

iii. "The word here rather means a strength ... that, out of such frail material as children's speech, God builds a tower

of strength, which, like some border castle, will bridle and still the restless enemy.” (Maclaren)

iv. “The praises of the Messiah, celebrated in the church by his children, have in them a strength and power which nothing can withstand; they can abash infidelity, when at its greatest height, and strike hell itself dumb.” (Horne)

v. Significantly, Jesus quoted this passage to His indignant accusers in Mat_21:16, as Jesus did wonderful miracles in the temple area, and as He received the praise of children who cried out Hosanna to the Son of David! (Mat_21:15).

b. Because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy: The reason why God displays His strength in unlikely vessels is because it works to silence the enemy; Satan and his fellow adversaries have nothing to say when god works so mightily in an otherwise weak person.

i. One dramatic example of this is the story of Job. In it, God silenced the accusations of Satan against both God and Job, by the way that He sustained Job with His unseen hand in the mist of profound weakness.

ii. In quoting this passage in Mat_21:15-16, Jesus told His accusers who He was and who they were. Since the babes and nursing infants praise God in Psalms 8, Jesus identified Himself as God. In this Jesus also identified the indignant scribes and teachers as the enemy and avenger described in this Psalm.

iii. “Aha! Aha! O adversary! To be overcome by behemoth or leviathan might make thee angry; but to be smitten out of infants’ mouths causes thee to bite the dust in utter dishonor. Thou art sore broken, now that ‘out of the mouth of babes and sucklings’ thou art put to shame.” (Spurgeon)

B. The surprising glory of mankind.

1. (Psa_8:3-5) Though seemingly insignificant, man is crowned with glory and honor. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?

For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

a. When I consider Your heavens: David knew the value of simply considering the glory of God's creation. He knew what it was like to look up into the starry sky and consider what a great God had made this vast, wonderful universe.

i. With the naked eye, one can see about 5,000 stars. With a four-inch telescope one can see about 2 million stars. With a 200-inch mirror of a great observatory, one can see more than a billion stars. The universe is so big that if one were to travel at the speed of light, it would take 40 billion years. Considering the heavens makes us see the greatness of God.

ii. These great heavenly objects such as the moon and the stars are the work of God's fingers. "Notwithstanding the amazing magnitude of the sun, we have abundant reason to believe that some of the fixed stars are much larger: and yet we are told they are the work of GOD'S FINGERS! What a hand, to move, form, and launch these globes!" (Clarke)

b. What is man that You are mindful of him: Considering the greatness of the heavens also made David

consider the relative smallness and insignificance of man. David wondered why just a big, great God would be mindful of such small beings.

i. “We gave you but a feeble image of our comparative insignificance, when we said that the glories of an extended forest would suffer no more from the fall of a single leaf, than the glories of an extended universe would suffer though the globe we tread upon, and all that it inherits, should dissolve.” (Chalmers, cited in Spurgeon)

ii. God is so big that He makes the universe with His fingers; man is so small that he is dwarfed by the universe. Yet David did not doubt that God was mindful of man; he simply said “You are mindful of Him” and only wondered why. Before we share David’s question, we should first share his assured confidence that God is mindful of us; He thinks of us and considers what we do.

iii. “Sorry, sickly man, a mass of mortalities, a map of miseries, a mixture or compound of dirt and sin ... And yet God is mindful of him.” (Trapp)

iv. “David’s question can be asked with many nuances. In Psa_144:3 f it mocks the arrogance of the rebel; in Job_7:17 it is a sufferer’s plea for respite; in Job_25:6 it shudders at human sin. But here it has no tinge of pessimism; only astonishment that thou are mindful and thou dost care.” (Kidner)

c. And the son of man that You should visit him: Indeed, using the poetic method of repetition, David repeated the idea in a stronger way. Son of man is a title that emphasizes the “humanness” of man, and we might say that visit him is yet stronger than are mindful of him.

i. David was confident that God not only carefully thought about man, but that He had some kind of personal connection and contact with men (that You visit him). He thinks about us and acts in our life.

ii. “The contrast between the stately splendor of the moon and the stars, and man – Enosh – frail man – and the son of man Ben-Adam – of apparently earthly origin. The contrasts are graphic.” (Morgan)

d. For You have made him a little lower than the angels: David saw that God made man a little lower than the angels, and this is evident in the way that man is beneath the angels in present glory, power, and nearness to God.

i. The word translated angels is Elohim, and most often refers to God Himself. There are some (such as Boice) who believe that David meant to say that man is a little lower than God, stressing the idea that man is made in God’s image.

ii. Yet the ancient translators of the Bible from Hebrew to Greek understood elohim here to speak of angelic beings; more importantly, that is how the writer to the Hebrews understood it. “The Hebrew for [angels] is simply ‘God’ or ‘gods’ (‘Elohim’). It may refer to angelic beings (cf. Psa_82:1; Psa_82:6-8); and the LXX, followed by Heb_2:7-9, takes it this way.” (VanGemeren)

iii. Significantly, David did not say that man was “a little higher than the beasts,” though one could say that is true. Theologians since Thomas Aquinas have noted that man is in a middle position between the angels and the animals; lower than the angels yet higher than the animals. Yet David rightly makes us look upward and not downward; though

many think of mankind as more animal than angelic, David wrote that You have made him a little lower than the angels.

iv. “Although made in God’s image and ordained to become increasingly like the God to whom they look, men and women have turned their backs on God. And since they will not look upward to God, which is their privilege and duty, they actually look downward to the beasts and so become increasingly like them.” (Boice)

v. This very passage is quoted by the author to the Hebrews at Heb_2:5-9 to reinforce and build upon this exact point. In it he notes that man’s low estate relates only to this world, and not the world to come (Heb_2:5). More pointedly, the writer to the Hebrews used this passage from Psalms 8 to show that Jesus really did add a genuinely human nature to His divine nature and thus also became a little lower than the angels.

e. You have crowned him with glory and honor: Though for a little while set lower than the angels, man’s destiny is one day to be crowned with a glory and honor that surpasses even the angels. It is the destiny of redeemed men and women to one day be lifted above the angels (1Co_6:3, Rev_20:5).

i. “Little can sometimes mean ‘for a little while’ in both Hebrew and Greek, which is the sense probably implied in the Epistle.” (Kidner) “A little lower in nature, since they are immortal, and but a little, because time is short; and when that is over, saints are no longer lower than the angels.” (Spurgeon)

ii. God’s glory is above the heavens; yet He put this same glory and honor on man as a crown. “This is an effective way of identifying man with God and of saying that he has been

made in God's image, reflecting God's glory in a way other parts of the creation do not." (Boice)

iii. As the writer to the Hebrews points out, it seems that this divine call and gift given to man of great dominion over the whole earth is tragically unfulfilled; fallen man seems so weak and incapable of dominion over his own thoughts and desires, much less crowned with glory and honor. Yet, as Hebrews properly says, but we see Jesus (Hebrew 2:9).

iv. "In Him we have had the full revelation of the greatness of man. But we have seen more than that. We have seen Him 'crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man.' That vision creates our confidence that man will at last realize the Divine purpose." (Morgan)

v. "Satan is no doubt filled with scorn of man when he looks at him and measures him with himself. 'Is this the creature that is to be set over all the works of God's hands, - made of earth and water, phosphates and metals? I am nobler far than he. Can I not flash like lightning, while he must creep about the world to find himself a grave?'" (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_8:6-9) The dominion of man and the excellence of God.

You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,
All sheep and oxen -

Even the beasts of the field, The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea

That pass through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

a. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands: David understood the mandate given to Adam and His descendants at creation (Gen_1:26-28; Gen_9:2). By both God's decree and through superior ability, man indeed has dominion over the other creatures and resources of the earth.

i. "In this section of the psalm allusions to the first chapter of Genesis are inescapable, which shows that David was thoroughly acquainted with this book." (Boice) Perhaps this knowledge of God's word came from his mother, whom he twice in the Psalms he refers to a maidservant of the LORD (Psa_86:16; Psa_116:16).

ii. As part of this authority, mankind has the responsibility to wisely manage the creatures and resources of this earth in a way that gives God glory and is good for man. It means that it is wrong to see man as merely part of the ecosystem (thus denying his God ordained dominion). It is also wrong for man to abuse the ecosystem, thus making him a bad manager of that which ultimately belongs to God (Psa_24:1). The mandate of dominion asks man to use the creatures and resources of the earth, but to use them wisely and responsibly.

b. You have put all things under his feet: Here David developed the idea introduced in the first line of Psa_8:6. The dominion of man extends to all things, including sheep, oxen ... beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea.

i. The Apostle Paul quoted this passage in 1Co_15:27. Paul quoted it in much the same way that the writer to the Hebrews did in Heb_2:5-9, showing that this promise of dominion is now only incompletely fulfilled among men. Yet it is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus, the ultimate Man; and will

be one day also completely fulfilled in His resurrected followers.

ii. In light of all this, it is a great tragedy when a man is captured and held in bondage by the things of this world. We were born to have dominion over such material things, instead of being in bondage to them.

c. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth: When David thought about how vast a dominion God had given to man, it made him praise God all over again. That this humble creature – humble in light of the majesty of the universe, humble in light of its present standing under angelic beings – should be given such authority is a demonstration of both the excellence and the goodness of God.

i. David understood that the position of man in creation says far more about the glory of God than saying anything about the glory of man. Understanding it all should make us praise God, not man. “For man’s dominion over nature, wonderful though it is, takes second place to his calling as servant and worshipper, to whose very children the name of the Lord has been revealed.” (Kidner)

ii. There are three wonderful and important truths about man found in this Psalm; when these truths are denied or neglected, man never is what God made him to be.

- God made man.

- God made man something glorious.

- God made man for a high and worthy destiny.

iii. All three of these principles are rooted in what God has made man; they do not exist nor are they fulfilled from the plan or work of man. That is why this glorious Psalm about man is even more so a Psalm about God. "The most striking feature of Psalms 8 ... is its description of man and his place in the created order. But the psalm does not begin by talking about man. It begins with a celebration of the surpassing majesty of God." (Boice)

iv. "He made us to have dominion by the word of creation. He made us kings unto God by his blood. His name shall, therefore, be honoured through all the earth." (Meyer)

v. "Even thou, silly worm, shalt honour him, when it shall appear what God hath done for thee, what lusts he hath mortified, and what graces he hath granted thee." (Spurgeon)

(Psa 8:2) From the mouths of children and nursing babies you have ordained praise on account of your adversaries,⁷ so that you might put an end to the vindictive enemy.⁸

(Psa 8:3) When I look up at the heavens, which your fingers made, and see the moon and the stars, which you set in place,⁹

(Psa 8:4) Of what importance is the human race,¹⁰ that you should notice¹¹ them?

Of what importance is mankind,¹² that you should pay attention to them,¹³

(Psa 8:5) and make them a little less than the heavenly beings?¹⁴

You grant mankind¹⁵ honor and majesty;¹⁶

(Psa 8:6) you appoint them to rule over your creation;¹⁷ you have placed¹⁸ everything under their authority,¹⁹

(Psa 8:7) including all the sheep and cattle, as well as the wild animals,²⁰

(Psa 8:8) the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea and everything that moves through the currents²¹ of the seas.

(Psa 8:9) O LORD, our Lord,²² how magnificent²³ is your reputation²⁴ throughout the earth!²⁵

(Psa 9:1) Psalm 91

For the music director; according to the alumoth-labben style;² a psalm of David.

I will thank the LORD with all my heart! I will tell about all your amazing deeds!³

(Guzik)

Psa 9:1-20

Psalms 9 – God Remembers, Man Forgets

The title of this Psalm reads, To the Chief Musician. To the tune of “Death of the Son.” A Psalm of David. The title indicates for us that David wrote this Psalm to God Himself (generally regarded as the “Chief Musician”) to a popularly known tune in his day (in Hebrew, “Muth Labben”). In this Psalm David celebrates the help and goodness of God with a big vision for the nations.

Some believe the title Muth Labben refers to a tune; others to an instrument upon which the song was played. Some (as in the New King James Version) associate the title with the phrase The Death of the Son, and apply that title as the

ancient Chaldee version does: “Concerning the death of the Champion who went out between the camps,” referring to Goliath. Perhaps David wrote this Psalm remembering the victory over Goliath from the advantage of many years since that triumph.

“From this point in the Psalter up to Psalms 148 the versions differ over the numbering of the psalms, since the lxx and Vulgate, followed by the Roman church, count Psalms 9, 10 as a single poem, while the Protestant churches follow the Hebrew reckoning.” (Derek Kidner)

A. Praising God for how He deals with an enemy.

1. (Psa_9:1-2) Singing praises to the God who does great things. I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart;
I will tell of all Your marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You;
I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.

a. I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart: David recognized that God was worthy of praise with the whole heart. His entire being should be directed in affection towards God.

i. “Half heart is no heart.” (Spurgeon) “We do not praise God with our lips very much, if at all. And when we do, if we do, we praise him halfheartedly... . It is more often true that Christians complain of how God has been treating them, carry on excessively about their personal needs or desires, or gossip.” (Boice)

b. I will tell of all Your marvelous works: Here David described an important and often neglected way to praise God – to tell of all His marvelous works. Simply remembering

and telling the great things God has done is wonderful way to praise Him.

i. “Christians, so called, when they meet, seldom speak about God! Why is this? Because they have nothing to say.” (Clarke)

ii. Marvelous works: “Wonderful deeds (or things) is a single Hebrew word, particularly frequent in the Psalms, used especially of the great redemptive miracles (e.g. Psa_106:7; Psa_106:22), but also of their less obvious counterparts in daily experience (cf. Psa_71:17), and of the hidden glories of Scripture (Psa_119:18).” (Kidner)

iii. David could see that “To-day is as full of God to this man as the sacred yesterdays of national history, and his deliverances as wonderful as those of old.” (Maclaren)

c. I will be glad and rejoice in You: David here described a second way to praise God, by simply finding and expressing gladness and joy in God. This is a simply choosing to rest in and celebrate the goodness, greatness, and kindness of God.

d. I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High: Here David listed a third way to praise God with the whole heart; by singing praise to the name of God. The idea is to honor and celebrate the character and nature of God, recognizing Him as the Most High.

i. O Most High: “God was so first called by Melchizedek, upon a like occasion as here by David, Gen_14:19-20.” (Trapp)

2. (Psa_9:3-5) David praises God for defending him against his enemies. When my enemies turn back,
They shall fall and perish at Your presence.

For You have maintained my right and my cause; You sat on the throne judging in righteousness. You have rebuked the nations,
You have destroyed the wicked;

You have blotted out their name forever and ever.

a. When my enemies turn back, they shall fall and perish at Your presence: In the first two verses of this Psalm David described general reasons for praising God, reasons that are always valid. Now he recounted a reason more specific to his present circumstances; he praised God for the way that the Most High defeated his enemies.

b. For You have maintained my right and my cause: David saw God move against his enemies by defending him on the principle of right and wrong in his conflict.

i. This shows us that the God of David – that is, the God of the Bible – is not dispassionate regarding right and wrong among men; that He is not always neutral in human conflict. It is entirely true that men may think God is on their side when He is not, and that it may be that God is against both parties in a dispute. Nevertheless, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, David could say “For You have maintained my right and my cause.”

ii. Understanding this should not make us automatically claim that God is on our side in our battles or disputes; it should rather make us endeavor to be on God’s side, by rigorously conforming ourselves to His word.

c. You sat on the throne ... You have rebuked the nations ... You have blotted out their name forever and ever: David saw God in action among the nations, and righteously judging the wicked.

i. By implication, we see that David also justified and defended the righteous – that is, himself in the present situation.

ii. “The past tenses of verses 5f. are ‘prophetic perfects’, a feature of the Old Testament: they describe coming events as if they have already happened, so certain is their fulfillment and so clear the vision.” (Kidner)

3. (Psa_9:6-8) David celebrates the Lord’s victory. O enemy, destructions are finished forever!

And you have destroyed cities; Even their memory has perished. But the Lord shall endure forever;

He has prepared His throne for judgment. He shall judge the world in righteousness,

And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.

a. O enemy, destructions are finished forever! Here David shifted his focus from speaking directly to the Lord to now addressing the enemies whom the Lord had defeated. David assured them that their evil work of destruction would end in futility.

i. “The metaphor of a judgment-seat is exchanged for a triumphant description of the destructions fallen on the land of the enemy, in all which God alone is recognised as the actor.” (Maclaren)

b. But the Lord shall endure forever: We might have expected David to set himself in contrast to the wicked; yet he was wise and humble enough to know that God would judge the wicked more for being His own enemies instead of David’s.

c. He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness: David looked forward to the eventual and ultimate rule of God over all nations. This would be the perfect expression of God's righteous judgment.

i. "The psalm is a great pattern of praise on a far too much neglected level in our day. We praise God much for His mercy. That is right, but it is a good thing to recognize His righteous rule, and to praise Him for that." (Morgan)

ii. One thousand years after David's time, the Apostle Paul quoted this line on Mars Hill: He shall judge the world in righteousness (Act_17:31).

B. Praising God for how He treats the oppressed.

1. (Psa_9:9-10) God is a trustworthy refuge.

The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble.

And those who know Your name will put their trust in You;

For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.

a. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed: Here David was grateful that God did more than judge the wicked; He also was a refuge and support for those oppressed by the wicked.

i. Times of trouble: "The rare word rendered 'extremity' in Psa_9:9 occurs only here and in Psa_10:1. It means a cutting off, i.e., of hope of deliverance. The notion of distress intensified to despair is conveyed." (Maclaren)

b. Those who know Your name will put their trust in You: David understood that the help of God wasn't given just

because God favored some and opposed others. It was because His people have relationship with Him (know Your name), they have faith in Him (out their trust in You), and they seek Him (who seek You).

i. It is a serious trial to the child of God to feel forsaken by God. There are particular times when we are likely to feel that the Lord has forsaken us.

- · When we have sinned
- · When we face great trouble
- · When we have some great job to do
- · When we feel our prayers are unanswered

ii. Yet we can find refuge in seeking God, in knowing His name. "To 'know Thy name' is here equivalent to learning God's character as made known by His acts." (Maclaren)

iii. "We never trust a man till we know him, and bad men are better known than trusted. Not so the Lord, for where his name is poured out as an ointment, there the virgins love him, fear him, rejoice in him, repose upon him." (Trapp)

iv. "Men complain of their little faith: the remedy is in their own hands; let them set themselves to know God... . But for all this, you must make time. You cannot know a friend from hurried interviews, much less God. So you must steep yourself in deep, long thoughts of his nearness and his love." (Meyer)

2. (Psa_9:11-12) Singing praise to the God who remembers His people. Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion!

Declare His deeds among the people.

When He avenges blood, He remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the humble.

a. Sing praises to the Lord: David exhorted others to do what he had already done in this Psalm – to praise the Lord, and to declare His deeds among the people.

i. “Singing and preaching, as means of glorifying God, are here joined together, and it is remarkable that, connected with all revivals of gospel ministry, there has been a sudden outburst of the spirit of song. Luther’s Psalms and Hymns were in all men’s mouths, and in the modern revival under Wesley and Whitfield, the strains of Charles Wesley, Cennick, Berridge, Toplady, Hart, Newton, and many others, were the outgrowth of restored piety.” (Spurgeon)

ii. David here communicated something known among those who praise God. When they praise God, it is natural for them to draw others into similar praise.

b. When He avenges blood, He remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the humble: David called others to praise God for the same reasons David had praised Him earlier; notably, because God is a partisan on behalf of the oppressed and the humble. God even avenges their blood.

i. Num_35:33-34 tells us that the blood of unavenged murders pollutes the earth. The blood of Abel spoke to God (Gen_4:10), as did the blood of Nabal (2Ki_9:26). God has promised to avenge blood and remember the murdered. “The designation of God as ‘making inquisition for blood’ thinks of Him as the Goel, or Avenger. To seek here means to demand back ... to demand compensation or satisfaction, and this finally comes to mean to avenge or punish.” (Maclaren)

ii. It reminds us that God will remember and avenge the blood of His persecuted people. “O persecutors, there is a time a-coming, when God will make a strict enquiry after the blood of Hooper, Bradford, Latimer, Taylor, Ridley, *etc.* There is a time a-coming, wherein God will enquire who silenced and suspended such-and-such ministers, and who stopped the mouths of such-and-such, and who imprisoned, confined, and banished such-and-such, who were once burning and shining lights, and who were willing to spend and be spent that sinners might be saved, and that Christ might be glorified.” (Spurgeon)

3. (Psa_9:13-14) A plea for mercy from the God who remembers. Have mercy on me, O Lord!

Consider my trouble from those who hate me, You who lift me up from the gates of death,

That I may tell of all Your praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in Your salvation.

a. Have mercy on me, O Lord! David had just considered that God remembered the cry of the humble.

Now David wanted God to remember him in his season of trouble (consider my trouble from those who hate me).

i. Gates of death ... Your praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: “The contrast between the gates of death and the gates of the New Jerusalem is very striking; let our songs be excited to the highest and most rapturous pitch by the double consideration of whence we are taken.” (Spurgeon)

b. That I may tell of all Your praise: David wanted God to rescue him so that he could give God all the more praise, and all the more passionately to rejoice in God’s salvation.

i. Again, the idea is that David has much more than his own benefit and well-being in mind. Even his deliverance is a

way for God to bring more glory to Himself. David did not see his rescue as the final goal; the goal was always God's greater glory.

ii. I will rejoice in Your salvation: "It is a good thing for the melancholy to become a Christian; it is an unfortunate thing for the Christian to become melancholy. If there is any man in the world that has a right to have a bright, clear face and a flashing eye, it is the man whose sins are forgiven him, and who is saved with God's salvation." (Spurgeon)

4. (Psa_9:15-16) The destiny of the wicked.

The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made; In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught.
The Lord is known by the judgment He executes;

The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.
Meditation. Selah

a. The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made: David understood the triumph of God to be so complete that His enemies are ensnared in the same trap they set for others. Even the best plans and efforts of those who oppose God end up serving His purpose.

i. This pattern is demonstrated again and again in the Scriptures.

- · Esau and Isaac plot against the purpose of God and end up serving it.

- · Joseph's brothers fight against the plan of God only to further it.

- · Hamaan built a gallows for Mordecai the Jew, only to be executed upon it himself.

- · Judas betrayed Jesus and became himself a fulfillment of prophecy.

- ii. This of course never justifies the evil that men do; though the betrayal of Judas sent Jesus to the cross, he himself was rightly called the son of perdition (the one destined for destruction) for his evil work (Joh_17:12).

- iii. “There is nothing that a wicked man does that is not against his own interest. He is continually doing himself harm, and takes more pains to destroy his soul than the righteous man does to get his saved unto eternal life. This is a weighty truth; and the psalmist adds: Higgaion; Selah. Meditate on this; mark it well.” (Clarke)

- b. The Lord is known by the judgment He executes: The greatness of God is demonstrated by the way He can both use the plans and efforts of the ungodly, while also bringing righteous judgment upon them.

C. Appealing to the God who judges in righteousness.

- 1. (Psa_9:17-18) God will deal with both the wicked and the humble. The wicked shall be turned into hell,
And all the nations that forget God.
For the needy shall not always be forgotten;

The expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.

- a. The wicked shall be turned into hell: Here, as David approaches the conclusion of the Psalm, he considered the end of the wicked – ultimate destruction in hell.

i. In the patterns of Hebraic poetry the phrase “and all the nations that forget God” can be considered just another way of describing the wicked mentioned in the previous line. Yet it is a useful repetition, reminding us of the inherently great sin of forgetting God.

ii. What does the sinner forget about God?

- · Man forgets the infinite majesty and glory of God.

- · Man forgets the mercies of God.

- · Man forgets the laws of God.

- · Man forgets the presence of God.

- · Man forgets the justice of God. iii. Why does the sinner forget God?

- · Man forgets God because the thought of God makes man afraid.

- · Man forgets God because the thought of God doesn't entertain him enough.

- · Man forgets God because the thought of God makes it hard to carry on in sin.

iv. “The forgetters of God are far more numerous than the profane or profligate, and according to the very forceful expression of the Hebrew, the nethermost hell will be the place into which all of them shall be hurled headlong. Forgetfulness seems a small sin, but it brings eternal wrath upon the man who lives and dies in it.” (Spurgeon)

v. The wicked shall be turned into hell: “Hebrew, into into hell (twice), that is, into the nethermost hell, the lowest

dungeon of hell... . R. Solomon's note here is, they shall be carried away from hell to judgment, and from judgment they shall be returned to the deepest pit of hell." (Trapp)

b. For the needy shall not always be forgotten: David expresses a beautiful contrast here. The wicked try to forget God; yet the needy and poor (here describing the godly who are oppressed by God's enemies) are not ... forgotten.

i. Shall not always be forgotten reminds us that from the perception of the needy and poor, they may for a time feel forgotten. Yet the good God promises that they will not always feel this way and their expectation will not forever be disappointed.

ii. There are few more painful things than feeling forgotten and feeling disappointed. To those in such pain, God makes these wonderful promises; that they shall not always be forgotten, and their expectation will not perish.

· · You shall not always be forgotten at the mercy-seat; so keep praying.

· · You shall not always be forgotten in the Word; so keep reading.

· · You shall not always be forgotten from the pulpit; so keep hearing.

· · You shall not always be forgotten at the Lord's Table; so keep receiving.

· · You shall not always be forgotten in your service; so keep serving.

· · You expected to have peace in Jesus; in Him you will have it.

· · You expected to triumph over sin; in Him you will triumph.

· · You expected to get out of trouble; in Him you will be delivered.

· · You expected to grow strong in faith; in Him you will be strengthened.

· · You expected to have spiritual joys and experiences, in Him you will have them.

iii. “The needy, and the poor, whose expectation is from the Lord, are never forgotten, though sometimes their deliverance is delayed for the greater confusion of their enemies, the greater manifestation of God’s mercy, and the greater benefit to themselves.” (Clarke)

2. (Psa_9:19-20) An appeal for God to glorify Himself among the nations. Arise, O Lord,
Do not let man prevail;

Let the nations be judged in Your sight. Put them in fear, O Lord,

That the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah

a. Arise, O Lord, do not let man prevail: Previously in this Psalm David expressed a firm confidence in God’s judgment of the wicked and His vindication of the righteous. Yet David did not allow this expectation to make him passive or fatalistic in regard to the outworking of God’s plan. Instead he boldly prayed, “Arise, O Lord, do not let man prevail.”

i. “Prayers are the Church’s weapons ... whereby she is terrible as an army with banners; she prays down her

enemies.” (Trapp)

ii. “The word for man, in both verses, one which tends to emphasize his frailty.” (Kidner)

iii. “All the wealth of Croesus, the wisdom of Solon, the power of Alexander, the eloquence of Demosthenes, if added together, would leave the possessor but a man. May we ever remember this, lest like those in the text, we should be put in fear.” (Spurgeon)

b. Let the nations be judged in Your sight... . That the nations may know themselves to be but men: David again expressed his confidence in God’s judgment of the wicked. Yet this did not lead David to a hatred of mankind or unhealthy joy in judgment. His real hope was that the display of God’s judgment would teach the nations their proper place before God (to be but men).

i. This is a place of humility, and as David has already noted in this Psalm, the humble are remembered before God (Psa_9:12). This was a prayer for God to reach the nations through the display of His judgment.

ii. “Strange, that man, dust in his original, sinful by his fall, and continually reminded of both by every thing in him and about him, should yet stand in need of some sharp affliction, some severe visitation from God, to bring him the knowledge of himself, and make him feel who and what he is.” (Horne)

iii. “So the two parts of the psalm end with the thought that the ‘nations’ may yet come to know the name of God, the one calling upon those who have experienced His deliverance to ‘declare among the peoples His doings,’ the other praying God to teach by chastisement what nations

who forget Him have failed to learn from mercies.”
(Maclaren)

iv. “What prayer, then, can we pray which is of more vital importance than that the nations may know themselves to be but men? Such knowledge must drive them to dependence upon God, and such dependence is the secret of national strength, and of national prosperity and permanence.” (Morgan)

(Psa 9:2) I will be happy and rejoice in you!
I will sing praises to you, O sovereign One!⁴

(Psa 9:3) When my enemies turn back,
they trip and are defeated⁵ before you.

(Psa 9:4) For you defended my just cause;⁶
from your throne you pronounced a just decision.⁷

(Psa 9:5) You terrified the nations with your battle cry;⁸ you
destroyed the wicked;⁹
you permanently wiped out all memory of them.¹⁰

(Psa 9:6) The enemy’s cities have been reduced to
permanent ruins;¹¹ you destroyed their cities;¹²
all memory of the enemies has perished.¹³

(Psa 9:7) But the LORD¹⁴ rules¹⁵ forever;
he reigns in a just manner.¹⁶

(Psa 9:8) He judges the world fairly;
he makes just legal decisions for the nations.¹⁷

(Psa 9:9) Consequently¹⁸ the LORD provides safety for the
oppressed;¹⁹ he provides safety in times of trouble.²⁰

(Psa 9:10) Your loyal followers trust in you,²¹

for you, LORD, do not abandon those who seek your help.²²

(Psa 9:11) Sing praises to the LORD, who rules²³ in Zion!
Tell the nations what he has done!²⁴

(Psa 9:12) For the one who takes revenge against murderers
took notice of the oppressed;²⁵ he did not overlook²⁶ their
cry for help²⁷

(Psa 9:13) when they prayed:²⁸ “Have mercy on me,²⁹
LORD!

See how I am oppressed by those who hate me,³⁰
O one who can snatch me away³¹ from the gates of death!

(Psa 9:14) Then I will³² tell about all your praiseworthy
acts;³³
in the gates of Daughter Zion³⁴ I will rejoice because of your
deliverance.”³⁵

(Psa 9:15) The nations fell³⁶ into the pit they had made;
their feet were caught in the net they had hidden.³⁷

(Psa 9:16) The LORD revealed himself;
he accomplished justice;
the wicked were ensnared by their own actions.³⁸
(Higgaion.³⁹ Selah)

(Psa 9:17) The wicked are turned back and sent to Sheol;⁴⁰
this is the destiny of⁴¹ all the nations that ignore⁴² God,
(Psa 9:18) for the needy are not permanently ignored,⁴³
the hopes of the oppressed are not forever dashed.⁴⁴

(Psa 9:19) Rise up, LORD!⁴⁵
Don't let men be defiant!⁴⁶
May the nations be judged in your presence!

(Psa 9:20) Terrify them, LORD!47

Let the nations know they are mere mortals!48 (Selah)

(Psa 10:1) Psalm 101

Why, LORD, do you stand far off?

Why do you pay no attention during times of trouble?2

(Guzik)

Psa 10:1-18

Psalms 10 – From Times of Trouble to Calm Confidence

Because this Psalm has no title (in the midst of several Psalms that do), and because it shares some similar themes with Psalms 9, some have thought that it was originally the second half of Psalms 9. There are more reasons to doubt this than to believe it; this Psalm rightly stands on its own as a Psalm of lament at the seeming prosperity of the wicked, but ultimate confidence in the judgments of God.

“There is not, in my judgment, a Psalm which describes the mind, the manners, the works, the words, the feelings, and the fate of the ungodly with so much propriety, fulness, and light, as this Psalm.” (Luther, cited in Spurgeon)

A. Questioning the success of the wicked.

1. (Psa_10:1-4) Questioning the seeming inactivity of God against the wicked. Why do You stand afar off, O Lord?
Why do You hide in times of trouble?

The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor;

Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised.
For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire;
He blesses the greedy and renounces the Lord.

The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God;

God is in none of his thoughts.

a. Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Here the Psalmist asked a question well known to those who follow God; the concern and sometimes anxiety over the seeming inactivity of God. The Psalmist felt that God was afar off and did even hide in times of trouble.

i. “The presence of God is the joy of his people, but any suspicion of his absence is distracting beyond measure... . It is not the trouble, but the hiding of our Father’s face, which cuts us to the quick.” (Spurgeon)

ii. Times of trouble: According to Maclaren, this was a rare word in the ancient Hebrew vocabulary, used only here and in Psa_9:9. “It means a cutting off, i.e., of hope of deliverance. The notion of distress intensified to despair is conveyed.”

b. The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor: This explains why the Psalmist was so troubled by the seeming inactivity of God. He saw the wicked, proud man who not only persecutes the poor and approves other sinners (blesses the greedy), he also sins against God (renounces the Lord ... does not seek God ... God is in none of his thoughts).

i. We immediately recognize that anyone who renounces the Lord is sinful. Yet the Psalmist here puts the one who does not seek God and the one who does not think about God (God is in none of this thoughts) in the same category as the one who renounces the Lord.

ii. Men do not seek God; this is a great sin. Men do not think about God; this also is a great sin. Man has obligations to God as His creator and sovereign, and it is a sin to neglect them. Man commits these sins because of his proud countenance; ignoring God is an expression of our independence and perceived equality (or superiority) to Him.

iii. Poole observed that pride is in the heart, “yet it is manifested in the countenance, and is therefore oft described by lofty looks.” “A brazen face and a broken heart never go together... . Honesty shines in the face, but villainy peeps out at the eyes.” (Spurgeon)

iv. It can be said of the proud, wicked man in this Psalm, God is in none of his thoughts. At the same time, he cannot not think of God, as he does later in Psa_10:11 and Psa_10:13 (the thoughts, God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see ...You will not require an account). Try as he may, he can't stop thinking about God.

c. Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised: This was the prayer of the Psalmist regarding the wicked. In other Psalms this is a confident expectation (such as Psa_9:15); here it is a heartfelt prayer.

i. “There are none who will dispute the justice of God, when he shall hang every Haman on his own gallows, and cast all the enemies of his Daniels into their own den of lions.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_10:5-7) The pride of the wicked. His ways are always prospering;
Your judgments are far above, out of his sight;

As for all his enemies, he sneers at them.

He has said in his heart, “I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity.”

His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression;
Under his tongue is trouble and iniquity.

a. His ways are always prospering: Here the Psalmist protested to God; not only did the wicked seem to enjoy constant prosperity, but did so because God’s judgments are far above, out of his sight.

i. We can imagine the Psalmist thinking, “If only God would demonstrate His judgment to this wicked man, he would change his ways.” This may sound like a complaint against God and in some sense is; yet it should more so be seen as a complete confidence in God’s rule and authority. The Psalmist recognized that the wicked could never prosper unless God allowed it; so he appealed to God to not allow it.

b. He sneers at them ... “I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity” ... full of cursing and deceit and oppression: The Psalmist examined and exposed the sins of the wicked man. He is not afraid of his enemies; and there is pride and sin in his heart, in his mouth, and under his tongue. No wonder he wanted God to stop this kind of sinner!

i. We are impressed at how often the wicked speech of men – which is often today regarded as no sin at all – is regarded as sin in the Psalms. “Cursing, lying, threatening, and troubling and evil speech are all destructive. They flow from one who does not believe that God will hold him or her accountable.” (Boice)

ii. “Such cursing men are cursed men.” (Trapp) “What a finished character! A blasphemer, a deceitful man, and a knave!” (Clarke)

iii. “He wants no prophet to teach him, no priest to atone for him, no king to conduct for him; he needs neither a Christ to redeem, nor a Spirit to sanctify him; he believes no Providence, adores no Creator, and fears no Judge.” (Horne)

3. (Psa_10:8-11) The violence and blasphemy of the wicked. He sits in the lurking places of the villages;
In the secret places he murders the innocent; His eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless.
He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den; He lies in wait to catch the poor;
He catches the poor when he draws him into his net.

So he crouches, he lies low,

That the helpless may fall by his strength. He has said in his heart,

“God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see.”

a. He sits in the lurking places of the villages: The Psalmist continued his examination of the wicked man (or men) who had troubled him so. Key to the nature of this wicked man is secrecy (lurking places ... secret places ... eyes are secretly fixed ... lies in wait secretly ... he lies low).

b. He murders the innocent: Another characteristic of the wicked man is seen in how he is a bully, focusing his violence against the weak (the innocent ... the helpless ... the poor). He isn't manful or honorable enough to openly fight those who might effectively fight back.

i. The helpless: “The pathetic state of his victims is shown in the reiterated word hapless, or ‘poor wretch’ (neb), found only here (Psa_10:8; Psa_10:10; Psa_10:14).” (Kidner)

ii. “ ‘Helpless’ is a word only found in this psalm (Psa_10:8; Psa_10:10; Psa_10:14), which has received various

explanations, but is probably derived from a root meaning to be black, and hence comes to mean miserable, hapless, or the like.” (Maclaren)

c. God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see: For the Psalmist, this made the murder, oppression, and bullying of the wicked man all the worse. He did it all cherishing the thought that God has forgotten, and would never see his wickedness against the poor and helpless.

i. It is common for men to think that God has forgotten their sins simply because it seems, to those men, that they were committed a long time ago. “Is it not a senseless thing to be careless of sins committed long ago? The old sins forgotten by men, stick fast in an infinite understanding. Time cannot raze out that which hath been known from eternity.” (Stephen Charnock, cited in Spurgeon)

ii. We can fairly say that this added blasphemy against God to his many sins against man. We can imagine the Psalmist’s blood boiling as he thought about this smiling, self-assured sinner and the pleasure he took in his sin.

iii. We also notice a great difference between the pain in the believer who fears God has forgotten (as in Psa_10:1), and the sinner who vainly hopes and takes false comfort in the idea that God has forgotten.

B. A prayer to God for protection and vindication.

1. (Psa_10:12-13) A call upon God to take action. Arise, O Lord!

O God, lift up Your hand!

Do not forget the humble.

Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart,

“You will not require an account.”

a. Arise, O Lord! The Psalmist simply called upon God to take action. “Lord, this wicked man finds comfort in the idea that You won’t do anything against Him. Arise, O Lord; lift up Your hand against this wicked man!”

i. It is not stated in this untitled Psalm, but often assumed that David wrote this Psalm, because it is arranged in the midst of several Psalms that are specifically attributed to David (Psalms 3-9; Psalms 11-32). Yet we know David to be a man of valiant action and warrior spirit; not the kind to stand passively back while the wicked murdered and terrorized the weak and helpless. The only exception to this would be if the wicked man were in a place of God-appointed authority, such as Saul was in Israel. Perhaps this Psalm was a cry of David for God to stop Saul because David knew that it was not his place to lift his hand against the Lord’s anointed.

b. Why do the wicked renounce God? The Psalmist answered his own question in the next lines. The wicked renounce God because they say in their heart that God will not require an account.

i. “The longsuffering of God, instead of leading such a one to repentance, only hardens him in his iniquity. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, he thinks it will not be executed at all.” (Horne)

ii. This observation has an inherent prayer: “Lord, require an account from this wicked man who renounces You!”

2. (Psa_10:14-15) Asking for God’s help in view of His kindness to the helpless. But You have seen, for You observe trouble and grief,

To repay it by Your hand.

The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless.

Break the arm of the wicked and the evil man;

Seek out his wickedness until You find none.

a. But You have seen, for You observe trouble and grief: Upon further reflection, the Psalmist recognized that God has indeed seen, because He sees and cares about the trouble and grief of the poor and helpless.

b. To repay it by Your hand: Here is the confidence of the Psalmist in God's judgments. He most certainly will repay the wicked for their sin. God will indeed answer the helpless and be the helper of the fatherless.

c. Break the arm of the wicked and the evil man: The Psalmist called upon God to help the weak by shattering the wicked and the evil man, and to thoroughly seek out his wickedness until You find none.

3. (Psa_10:16-18) Confidence in God's judgments. The Lord is King forever and ever;

The nations have perished out of His land. Lord, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear,

To do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, That the man of the earth may oppress no more.

a. The Lord is King forever and ever: The Psalmist began with almost despair in his times of trouble; he ends with calm confidence in the reign of the Lord as an eternal King.

i. God had long been declared the king of Israel (Exo_15:18), even when His people rejected His rule (1Sa_8:7-9). If David wrote this Psalm (especially during a time of persecution from Saul), the words the Lord is King forever and ever would have special meaning, recognizing the reign of God even over the troubled and dysfunctional reign of Saul.

b. The nations have perished out of His land: Remembering the past victories of God against the cruel enemies of His people (in this case, the Canaanites who occupied His land) gave the Psalmist greater confidence regarding the present help of the Lord.

i. "They are all either cut off or converted. This may refer to the Canaanites. What a mercy that we can say this of our own country! Once it was entirely heathen; now not one heathen family in the whole land." (Adam Clarke, speaking of his native England)

c. You have heard the desire of the humble ... You will prepare their heart ... You will cause Your ear to hear: This continues to express the calm confidence of the Psalmist. God will not abandon the poor and needy, but will help and bless them.

i. "David does not say, 'Thou hast heard the prayer of the humble;' he means that, but he also means a great deal more. Sometimes, we have desires that we cannot express; they are too big, too deep; we cannot clothe them in language. At other times, we have desires which we dare not express; we feel too bowed down, we see too much of our own undesert to be able to venture near the throne of God to utter our desires; but the Lord hears the desire when we cannot or dare not turn it into the actual form of a prayer." (Spurgeon)

ii. With a wonderful phrase – You will prepare their heart – the Psalmist reminds us that the spiritual preparation of the heart is a great gift, an answer to prayer, and a mark of God's blessing. "Surely none but the Lord can prepare a heart for prayer. One old writer says it is far harder work to raise the big bell into the steeple than to ring it afterwards. This witness is true. When the bell is well hung you can ring it readily enough; but in that uplifting of the heart lies the work and the labor." (Spurgeon)

iii. "The 'humble' and lowly, whatever they may suffer in the world, are the favourites of Jehovah: that he attends to the very 'desires' of their hearts: that such hearts 'prepared' to prayer, are so many instruments strung and tuned by the hand of heaven." (Horne)

iv. "Where God giveth a praying heart it is sure that he will show a pitying heart. If he prepare the heart, he will also bend his ear." (Trapp)

v. "See the economy of the grace of God: 1. God prepares the heart; 2. Suggests the prayer; 3. Hears what is prayed; 4. Answers the petition. He who has got a cry in his heart after God, may rest assured that that cry proceeded from a

Divine preparation, and that an answer will soon arrive. No man ever had a cry in his heart after salvation, but from God. He who continues to cry shall infallibly be heard.” (Clarke)

d. To do justice ... that the man of the earth may oppress no more: The Psalmist ends with assurance of God’s justice applied to the wicked. What began with a sense of despair in times of trouble has ended with calm confidence in God’s justice and victory.

i. The man of the earth: “Earthly and mortal men, who are made of the dust, and must return to it, such as the oppressors of they people are.” (Poole)

ii. “Under the rule of God, the day must come when, ‘That man who is of the earth may be terrible no more.’ These were the concluding words of the song, and they constitute a fitting answer to its opening inquiry.” (Morgan)

(Psa 10:2) The wicked arrogantly chase the oppressed;³ the oppressed are trapped⁴ by the schemes the wicked have dreamed up.⁵

(Psa 10:3) Yes,⁶ the wicked man⁷ boasts because he gets what he wants;⁸ the one who robs others⁹ curses¹⁰ and¹¹ rejects the LORD.¹²

(Psa 10:4) The wicked man is so arrogant he always thinks, “God won’t hold me accountable; he doesn’t care.”¹³

(Psa 10:5) He is secure at all times.¹⁴ He has no regard for your commands;¹⁵ he disdains all his enemies.¹⁶

(Psa 10:6) He says to himself,¹⁷ “I will never¹⁸ be upended,

because I experience no calamity.”¹⁹

(Psa 10:7) His mouth is full of curses and deceptive, harmful words;²⁰ his tongue injures and destroys.²¹

(Psa 10:8) He waits in ambush near the villages;²² in hidden places he kills the innocent.
His eyes look for some unfortunate victim.²³

(Psa 10:9) He lies in ambush in a hidden place, like a lion in a thicket;²⁴ he lies in ambush, waiting to catch²⁵ the oppressed;
he catches the oppressed²⁶ by pulling in his net.²⁷

(Psa 10:10) His victims are crushed and beaten down;
they are trapped in his sturdy nets.²⁸

(Psa 10:11) He says to himself,²⁹ “God overlooks it;
he does not pay attention;
he never notices.”³⁰

(Psa 10:12) Rise up, LORD!³¹
O God, strike him down!³²
Do not forget the oppressed!

(Psa 10:13) Why does the wicked man reject God?³³
He says to himself,³⁴ “You³⁵ will not hold me accountable.”³⁶

(Psa 10:14) You have taken notice,³⁷
for³⁸ you always see³⁹ one who inflicts pain and suffering.⁴⁰
The unfortunate victim entrusts his cause to you;⁴¹ you deliver⁴² the fatherless.⁴³

(Psa 10:15) Break the arm⁴⁴ of the wicked and evil man!

Hold him accountable for his wicked deeds,⁴⁵
which he thought you would not discover.⁴⁶

(Psa 10:16) The LORD rules forever!⁴⁷
The nations are driven out of his land.⁴⁸

(Psa 10:17) LORD, you have heard⁴⁹ the request⁵⁰ of the
oppressed;
you make them feel secure because you listen to their
prayer.⁵¹

(Psa 10:18) You defend⁵² the fatherless and oppressed,⁵³
so that mere mortals may no longer terrorize them.⁵⁴

(Psa 11:1) Psalm 111

For the music director; by David.

In the LORD I have taken shelter.²
How can you say to me,³
“Flee to a mountain like a bird!⁴

(Guzik)
Psa 11:1-7

Psalms 11 - The Answer of Faith to the Advice of Fear

This Psalm records well-intentioned, but faithless advice of David's friends when he was a fugitive from King Saul. David lifts his eyes to the Lord to find faith in a time of testing. He knew the safest place to stand was in radical trust in God.

A. The advice of fear.

1. (Psa_11:1) David reacts to the advice to flee. In the Lord I
put my trust;
How can you say to my soul,

“Flee as a bird to your mountain”?

a. In the years before he took the throne of Israel, David lived the life of a fugitive. He was constantly hunted by King Saul, and lived in constant danger. In such a time, his friends advised him, “Flee as a bird to your mountain.” His friends meant well, but David knew it was the wrong thing to do.

b. So, he reacts with near outrage: In the Lord I put my trust; how can you say to my soul, “Flee as a bird to your mountain?” No matter how well intentioned his friends are, they are giving him the advice of fear. The advice of fear couldn’t stand with the position of trust David had in the Lord.

i. “He would rather dare the danger than exhibit a distrust in the Lord his God.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_11:2-3) David remembers the words of fear in the mouths of his friends. For look! The wicked bend their bow,
They make ready their arrow on the string,

That they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart. If the foundations are destroyed,
What can the righteous do?

a. For look! The wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow on the string: in today’s language, David’s friends would say, “Look! There is a loaded gun to your head, and you have to run!”

b. The advice given to David is well meant, but ungodly. It is like when Peter advised Jesus to not go the way of the cross

(Mat_16:22-23). Peter meant well, but he was really being used by the devil!

i. We must always be careful with the advice we give to others. First, we must always mind our own business and not be busybodies (1Th_4:11, 1Ti_5:13). Second, we can be too confident in our own perception of a situation. Job's friend confidently said "I will tell you, hear me; what I have seen I will declare" (Job_15:17), but he was wrong. Our motive is good and right, but the advice is wrong.

c. That they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart: here, David's friends are trying to make him afraid of a secret attack. When we fear the things we can't see, we are really walking in fear!

i. David's friends may have been using an element of manipulation here. They may have reasoned like this: "Look, for his own good we have to get David to get out of here. It's justified for us to exaggerate things a little bit to get him to do what is right." But it wasn't justified. Manipulation is never right, even if it is for a good cause.

d. If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? These words in the mouths of David's friends are meant to be a warning. The idea is, "The very foundation of Saul's government is destroyed. What can a righteous one like you do, except flee?"

e. When David hears these words from his friends, his head probably told him there was something to them. But his heart told him that to heed this advice and to flee would be to compromise.

i. "He will use such plausible logic, that unless we once for all assert our immovable trust in Jehovah, he will make us

like the timid bird which flies to the mountain whenever danger presents itself.” (Spurgeon)

B. The answer of faith.

1. (Psa_11:4 a) David answers by remembering where God is. The Lord is in His holy temple,
The Lord’s throne is in heaven;

a. The Lord is in His holy temple: probably, David has in mind both the LORD’s temple on earth (the tabernacle) and the LORD’s temple in heaven. David is reminding himself and his friends, “God hasn’t gone anywhere. You can go to His temple and meet with Him.” He may also have the thought, “The LORD isn’t going anywhere, so I won’t either.”

i. When the advice of fear comes upon us, we can only arrive at the answer of faith by spending time with the LORD. When we think about our problems, the advice of fear often overwhelms us. When we pray about our problems, the answer of faith assures our hearts.

ii. When we think of Jesus in the temple of heaven, we remember that He is praying for us. “What plots can men devise which Jesus will not discover? Satan has doubtless desired to have us, that he may sift us as wheat, but Jesus is in the temple praying for us, and how can our faith fail?” (Spurgeon)

b. The Lord’s throne is in heaven: this is the source of David’s confidence. It is not foolhardiness or self-reliance. Instead, David has confidence in a holy, all-powerful, all-knowing God.

i. David was asked, What can the righteous do? David answered with another question: “What

can't the righteous do when the LORD God is still on His throne?"

ii. The problems were indeed bad. "But what were all these things to a man whose trust was in God alone?" (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_11:4-5) David answers by remembering what God sees.

His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. The Lord tests the righteous,
But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

a. His eyes behold: David doesn't need to take the advice of fear, because God sees his situation. David can have a greater cause than self-preservation, because he knows that God is looking at him and taking care of him.

b. The Lord tests the righteous: again, David is answering the question, If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? David answers, "The righteous can know that the LORD is testing them, and because a loving God is testing them, they can know they will not be pushed too far or forsaken. The righteous can know the LORD is in control."

c. But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates: as God sees, He is not a detached observer. He cares; He sees the wicked and hates them. David is saying, "I don't need to flee to protect myself, because God in heaven is watching me and sees how sinful the conduct of my enemies is."

3. (Psa_11:6) David answers by remembering the destiny of the wicked. Upon the wicked He will rain coals;
Fire and brimstone and a burning wind

Shall be the portion of their cup.

a. Upon the wicked He will rain coals, fire and brimstone and a burning wind: God will punish the wicked. This gives David confidence in the midst of the advice of fear. After all, if the ungodly persecute the righteous, how much more will the righteous God persecute the ungodly?

b. Fire and brimstone: this gives the image of ultimate, eternal judgment. What does David have to fear from men destined for hell?

c. This shall be the portion of their cup: the image of the cup as a container of judgment reminds us of Jesus' prayer in the garden: O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will (Mat_26:39). The cup Jesus dreaded was the cup that contained the wrath of God against sin; wrath that we deserved, but Jesus drank for us.

4. (Psa_11:7) David answers by remembering the love and favor of God. For the Lord is righteous,
He loves righteousness;

His countenance beholds the upright.

a. For the Lord is righteous: this was a comfort and encouragement to David. When we are rebelling against the LORD, His righteousness is no comfort to us. But David knew he was the innocent victim of persecution, and he knew the righteous LORD would take up his cause.

b. He loves righteousness: David knew that as he walked righteously, he would keep [himself] in the love of God. (Jud_1:21) It isn't that we must earn God's love by our

personal righteousness; instead, our pursuit and practice of righteousness keeps us flowing in the benefits of God's love.

i. God's love extends everywhere. Nothing can separate us from God's love, and He loved us while we were still sinners (Rom_5:8). But we can deny ourselves the benefits of God's love.

ii. People who don't keep themselves in the love of God end up living as if they are on the dark side of the moon. The sun is always out there, always shining, but they are never in a position to receive the light or warmth of the sun. They are like the Prodigal Son of Luke 15, who was always loved by the father, but for a time not he did not benefit from that love.

c. His countenance beholds the upright: scholars and translators debate if this means "God's upright people see Him" or "the LORD sees His upright people." Most modern translations think it speaks of God's people seeing Him: Upright men will see his face (NIV), The upright will behold His face (NASB), The godly shall see his face (LB). However, it really doesn't matter, because both are true.

i. God shines His face on His people. This speaks of "an eye of approbation, and true and tender affection, and watchful and gracious providence; which is oft signified by God's beholding or looking upon men" (Poole). In fact, the last line of the priestly blessing of Num_6:26 is, The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.

ii. God's people will see Him. I will see Your face in righteousness (Psa_17:15). Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Mat_5:8). In fact, the desire to behold God is one of the greatest motivations to an upright life and heart.

d. All in all, when David considers the greatness of God, the care of God, and the vision of God, it all outweighs the danger. For David, trusting God was the safest move of all. His friends may or may not have meant well, but David would not receive their advice of fear. Instead, he would answer with faith.

(Psa 11:2) For look, the wicked⁵ prepare⁶ their bows,⁷ they put their arrows on the strings, to shoot in the darkness⁸ at the morally upright.⁹

(Psa 11:3) When the foundations¹⁰ are destroyed, what can the godly¹¹ accomplish?“¹²

(Psa 11:4) The LORD is in his holy temple;¹³ the LORD's throne is in heaven.¹⁴
His eyes¹⁵ watch;¹⁶
his eyes¹⁷ examine¹⁸ all people.¹⁹

(Psa 11:5) The LORD approves of²⁰ the godly,²¹ but he²² hates²³ the wicked and those who love to do violence.²⁴

(Psa 11:6) May the LORD rain down²⁵ burning coals²⁶ and brimstone²⁷ on the wicked!
A whirlwind is what they deserve!²⁸

(Psa 11:7) Certainly²⁹ the LORD is just;³⁰ he rewards godly deeds;³¹
the upright will experience his favor.³²

(Psa 12:1) Psalm 121

For the music director; according to the sheminith style;² a psalm of David.

Deliver, LORD!

For the godly³ have disappeared;⁴ people of integrity⁵ have vanished.⁶

(Guzik)

Psa 12:1-8

Psalms 12 – The Words of Man and the Word of God

The title of this Psalm reads, To the Chief Musician. On an eight-stringed harp. A Psalm of David. The title is like many others in this general section of the Book of Psalms, simply stating the audience, the instrument, and the author of the Psalm. In this Psalm David bemoans the vicious words of his adversaries, and in contrast praises the pure and precious Word of God.

A. The problem of flattering lips.

1. (Psa_12:1-2) The disappearance of the godly man and his unfortunate replacement. Help, Lord, for the godly man ceases!

For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.

They speak idly everyone with his neighbor;

With flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

a. Help, Lord, for the godly man ceases! The exact circumstances under which David wrote this Psalm are unknown, and it could have been during many different periods in his life. David knew what it was like to feel that the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.

i. David was a warrior and a fierce soldier; but we see here that he also had to deal with the battles of gossip and

backbiting; of idle and deceptive talkers. David knew what it was like to feel all alone in this kind of battle, where it seemed that no one would speak up and defend him. Instead he took his case to the Lord. We sense that David probably would have preferred to battle with swords and shields than among the gossips and backbiters surrounding him.

b. With flattering lips and a double heart they speak: Instead of the godly man, David saw around him those who spoke with idle chatter (they speak idly everyone with his neighbor), and who were two-faced liars (flattering lips ... a double heart).

i. We do not know the exact circumstances of David's life that prompted this Psalm; it may well have been the period when he was in the court of King Saul, yet a target for the mad jealousy of the king. We can easily imagine a vicious whispering campaign against David among those who wanted to gain favor with the misguided king.

ii. The essence of flattering lips is that they say what people want to hear. There are many such talkers today, even within the church; those who know the right answer for every occasion, but speak with no honesty or transparency of heart. The constantly speak what people hope to hear or what is assumed to be proper instead of their true thoughts, feelings, and deeds.

iii. "Daniel says that flattery will be a tool of that wicked world ruler who will arise at the last day (Dan_11:32)." (Boice)

iv. "'They speak with a double heart.' The original is, 'A heart and a heart:' one for the church, another for the change; one for Sundays, another for working-days; one for the king,

another for the pope. A man without a heart is a wonder, but a man with two hearts is a monster.” (Thomas Adams, cited in Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_12:3-5) A plea for God to judge those who speak wickedly. May the Lord cut off all flattering lips,
And the tongue that speaks proud things, Who have said,
“With our tongue we will prevail;

Our lips are our own; Who is lord over us?”

“For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy,

Now I will arise,” says the Lord;

“I will set him in the safety for which he yearns.”

a. May the Lord cut off all flattering lips: David felt somewhat helpless against these destructive chatterers; he found his refuge in the Lord, to whom he appealed to cut off ... the tongue that speaks proud things.

i. Benjamin Franklin once wrote, “Since I cannot govern my own tongue, tho’ within my own teeth, how can I hope to govern the tongues of others?” David felt this same frustration with the idle and destructive tongues of others.

ii. “Better to have the tongue touched with a live coal from the altar than cut out.” (Maclaren)

b. With our tongue we will prevail ... Who is lord over us? David despised these destructive tongues not only for what they said, but also for their pride that made them so difficult to stop. It was as if they freely said, “You can never make us stop talking as we please.”

i. “With our tongues we will prevail; by raising and spreading slanders and evil reports concerning him, whereby both Saul

will be highly and implacably enraged against David, and the hearts of the people alienated from him.” (Poole)

ii. For the one who professes to be a follower of Jesus Christ, there is only one answer to this question, Who is lord over us? Jesus Christ is our Lord, and He owns us body, soul, and spirit. We are bought with a price, and are therefore obligated to glorify God in our bodies, including our lips and tongue (1Co_6:20).

c. Now I will arise: These destructive talkers spoke as they pleased; but they could not stop the Lord God from speaking as He pleased. In a wonderful and dramatic way the Lord announced that He would act on behalf of the poor and needy victimized by these proud, unstoppable talkers.

i. “Think of God arising in his might. When he ariseth, he shakes terribly the earth; nothing stands before him when he once arises. Poor, sick, needy, sorrowing, sighing child of God, it is you who can bring him into this marvellous state of activity.” (Spurgeon)

d. I will set him in the safety for which he yearns: David believed that this was God’s word for him. He was one of the poor and needy yearning for safety from these destructive critics and talkers.

B. The words of God and the wickedness of men.

1. (Psa_12:6-7) The pure words of the Lord. The words of the Lord are pure words,
Like silver tried in a furnace of earth,

Purified seven times.
You shall keep them, O Lord,

You shall preserve them from this generation forever.

a. The words of the Lord are pure words: In contrast to the idle, two-faced, lying, and proud lips of David's adversaries, God's words are pure, as if they were fine silver ... purified seven times.

i. "What a contrast between the vain words of man, and the pure words of Jehovah. Man's words are yea and nay, but the Lord's promises are yea and amen." (Spurgeon)

ii. "The words of Jehovah are holy in his precepts, just in his laws, gracious in his promises, significant in his institutions, true in his narrations, and infallible in his predictions. What are thousands of gold and silver compared to the treasures of the sacred page!" (Horne)

iii. This means that the word of God can be trusted in every sense. It is good, pure, and tested thoroughly. We can trust that God has tested His own word; but it has also been tested by students, scholars, critics, and doubters through the centuries – and the Word of God still stands. It is like a mighty anvil that has worn out countless hammers that have pounded upon it.

iv. "The Bible has passed through the furnace of persecution, literary criticism, philosophic doubt, and scientific discovery, and has lost nothing but those human interpretations which clung to it as alloy to precious ore. The experience of saints has tried it in every conceivable manner, but not a single doctrine or promise has been consumed in the most excessive heat." (Spurgeon)

v. "After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest guns that could be brought to bear, the Bible has survived – and is perhaps the better for the siege. Even on the critics' own

terms – historical fact – the Scriptures seem more acceptable now than when the rationalists began the attack.” (Time Magazine, cited in Boice)

vi. “Do sinners talk of vanity? Let saints then speak of Jesus and his gospel. Do they talk impure words? Then let the faithful use the pure words of God, which like silver, the more used, the more melted in the fire, the more precious will they be.” (Robert Hawker, cited in Spurgeon)

vii. “As silver enriches its owner, so does the Word of God enrich its lovers. Nothing so strengthens the intellect, clears the judgment, enlarges the views, purifies the taste, quickens the imagination, and educates the whole man.” (Meyer)

b. You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall preserve them: This was David’s declaration of confidence in God’s ability to preserve His own words. He did not only give His word to mankind; His providential hand has protected the existence and integrity of His word through the centuries.

i. There are some manuscripts and Bible translations that render this You shall keep us, O Lord, You shall preserve us. Yet, according to VanGemeren, there is legitimate manuscript support for the rendering You shall keep them ... You shall preserve them. We can take it as true that God will keep and preserve both His Word and His people.

ii. “The psalmist breaks out into praise of the purity of His words, and declares that Jehovah will ‘keep them,’ and ‘preserve them.’ The ‘them’ refers to the words. There is no promise made of widespread revival or renewal. It is the salvation of a remnant and the preservation of His own words which Jehovah promises.” (Morgan)

iii. God has and will keep and preserve His Word. “The French atheist Voltaire made these claims openly. He once said, ‘In twenty years Christianity will be no more. My single hand shall destroy the edifice it took twelve apostles to rear.’ He wrote that in fifty years no one would remember Christianity. But in the year he wrote that, the British Museum paid the Russian government five hundred thousand dollars for a Bible manuscript while one of Voltaire’s books was selling in the London book stalls for just eight cents.” (Boice)

iv. “Give up no line of God’s revelation... . Brethren, we cannot endure this shifty theology. May God send us a race of men who have backbones! Men who believe something, and would die for what they believe. This Book deserves the sacrifice of our all for the maintenance of every line of it.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_12:8) The way of the wicked. The wicked prowl on every side,
When vileness is exalted among the sons of men.

a. The wicked prowl on every side: David knew that the existence and exaltation of God’s pure word would not eliminate the wicked. They would still exist and prowl on every side as they could, but never with the assurance of final victory.

i. “Here we return to the fount of bitterness, which first made the Psalmist run to the wells of salvation, namely, the prevalence of wickedness.” (Spurgeon)

b. When vileness is exalted among the sons of men: We might feel that this Psalm ends on a sad, depressing note. Yet David was utterly realistic in his outlook. He knew that

even with the precious and pure word of God available to men, many of the sons of men would still prefer that vileness is exalted.

i. “If ‘vileness is set on high among the sons of men,’ it is because the sons of men prefer it to the stern purity of goodness. A corrupt people will crown corrupt men and put them aloft.” (Maclaren)

ii. We might say that David almost left it as a challenge. Let the sons of men exalt vileness; he would exalt the pure and precious Word of God. Eventually all would see the winner of this contest. Let these wicked men do their worst – God helping him, David would do his best and see the victory of the Lord.

(Psa 12:2) People lie to one another;⁷ they flatter and deceive.⁸

(Psa 12:3) May the LORD cut off⁹ all flattering lips, and the tongue that boasts!¹⁰

(Psa 12:4) They say,¹¹ “We speak persuasively;¹² we know how to flatter and boast.¹³ Who is our master?”¹⁴

(Psa 12:5) “Because of the violence done to the oppressed,¹⁵ because of the painful cries¹⁶ of the needy, I will spring into action,”¹⁷ says the LORD.
“I will provide the safety they so desperately desire.”¹⁸

(Psa 12:6) The LORD’s words are absolutely reliable.¹⁹ They are as untainted as silver purified in a furnace on the ground, where it is thoroughly refined.²⁰

(Psa 12:7) You, LORD, will protect them;²¹

you will continually shelter each one from these evil people,²²

(Psa 12:8) for the wicked seem to be everywhere,²³ when people promote evil.²⁴

(Psa 13:1) Psalm 131

For the music director; a psalm of David.

How long, LORD, will you continue to ignore me?²

How long will you pay no attention to me?³

(Guzik)

Psa 13:1-6

Psalm 13 – Enlighten My Eyes

The title tells us both the author and the audience of the Psalm: To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. Some believe that the Chief Musician is the Lord God Himself, and others suppose to be a leader of choirs or musicians in David's time, such as Heman the Singer or Asaph (1Ch_6:33; 1Ch_16:17; 1Ch_25:6). This is a Psalm of transition. Starting in discouragement and despair, David finishes in a place of trust, joy, and encouragement.

A. David's despair.

1. (Psa_13:1) David's despair with the Lord. How long, O Lord?

Will You forget me forever?

How long will You hide Your face from me?

a. How long, O Lord? It seems that every child of God has asked this question at one time or another, and that every

follower of God has felt neglected by God - or at least that they have waited a long time for God to do what needs to be done.

i. "If the reader has never yet found occasion to use the language of this brief ode, he will do so ere long, if he be a man after the Lord's own heart." (Spurgeon)

ii. How long: "This question is repeated no less than four times. It betokens very intense desire for deliverance, and great anguish of heart ... It is not easy to prevent desire from degenerating into impatience. O for grace that, while we wait on God, we may be kept from indulging a murmuring spirit!" (Spurgeon)

iii. How long is the critical question. Often we faint under simple length of our trials. We feel we could endure almost anything if we knew when it would come to an end; yet sometimes we are tried under problems that make us cry out, "How long?"

iv. "Whenever you look into David's Psalms, you may somewhere or another see yourselves. You never get into a corner but you find David in that corner. I think that I was never so low that I could not find that David was lower; and I never climbed so high that I could not find that David was up above me, ready to sing his song upon his stringed instrument, even as I could sing mine." (Spurgeon)

b. Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? The pain in David's heart came from a sense that God had forgotten him and that God was distancing Himself from David. No doubt, David had faced worse circumstances but had faced them more bravely when he sensed the presence of God with him. Yet now, feeling

distant from God, it did not take much to send David into despair.

i. God will never forget us: But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me.” Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands. (Isa_49:14-16)

ii. “The final absence of God is hell itself. ‘Depart from me, ye cursed,’ is worse than ‘into everlasting fire.’ To be punished from the presence of the Lord is the hell of hells, 2Th_1:9.” (Trapp)

c. Forget ... Hide Your face: Of course, God did not forget David. God did not hide His face from David - but David felt like it. When we have such strong feelings then the feelings create their own reality. David felt God had forgotten him, and felt God was hiding. So, in a sense, it was true for David - but true according to feelings, not according to fact.

i. There is a balance in life when it comes to feelings. Some people ignore feelings, and think that feelings should have nothing to do with our relationship with God. This is an extreme, because God has given us feelings as an expression of His image in us. We can feel anger, love, care, sorrow, and many other feelings, because God feels those feelings. In this sense, feelings are a gift from God and a sign that we are made in His image.

ii. On the other side, some live their lives ruled by feelings. They believe whatever reality their feelings present them. The problem with this is that though we have feelings because we are made in the image of God, our feelings are affected by our fallenness. We can't trust our feelings

because of this. In this sense, it was all right for David to feel these feelings, and good to take them to God, but he should never accept the reality of feelings as “real” reality.

iii. “This is a lesson of profound value. If the heart be overburdened and Jehovah seems to hide His face, let the story of woe be told to Him. It is a holy exercise. Men may not understand it. They may even charge us with failing faith.” (Morgan)

2. (Psa_13:2) David’s despair with himself and others. How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart daily?

How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

a. How long shall I take counsel in my soul: No wonder David was discouraged! Taking counsel in his own soul had led him to sorrow in his heart daily. When I am discouraged and depressed, the answer is not looking inside myself, but in looking to the Lord.

i. Many times when I am confronted with problems, I find this to be true: The more I think about the problems, the more depressed I get. But when I pray about the problems, a glorious sense of release and peace comes.

ii. Thinking about our troubles is hard work. Trouble is often like a pill God wants us to just swallow, but we make it worse by keeping it in our mouths and chewing it.

iii. Spurgeon advised a sermon on the phrase, “How long should I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?” He suggested that the sermon would have these points: “Self-torture, its cause, curse, crime, and cure.”

b. How long will my enemy be exalted over me? This mentions the third way that David was depressed. David didn't want to lose in any area he was attacked and see his enemy ... exalted over him.

- · First, in his relationship with God.

- · Second, within himself.

- · Third, in regard to his enemies.

i. This was not a purely selfish desire. David knew he was the Lord's man, with a special calling to lead God's people. In this sense, David's enemies were the Lord's enemies, and enemies over the people of God.

ii. David's feeling that God had abandoned him was connected to his sense of depression. Boice helpfully lists several sources of spiritual depression:

- · Temperament; one may be temperamentally inclined to depression.

- · Illness can drain the physical strength and lead to depression.

- · Exhaustion can also leave one quite open to depression and the feeling of abandonment.

- · The let-down after some great effort, fueled by coming down off of an adrenaline high can often lead to depression.

- · Pressure from spiritual and natural enemies can push us toward depression. B. David's dependent prayer.

1. (Psa_13:3) David prays for his relationship with God. Consider and hear me, O Lord my God;

Enlighten my eyes,

Lest I sleep the sleep of death;

a. Consider and hear me: We should not think that David meant two different things when he said, “Consider and hear me.” He used the Hebrew method of repetition to show emphasis. David desperately cried out to God, asking the Lord to hear him.

i. David felt God was not listening before (Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? Psa_13:1). Yet he should continue to cry out because God is honored when we persistently and desperately cry out to Him.

ii. God often waits until our prayers are desperate until He hears us. The cause of the powerlessness of much of our prayer is betrayed by its lack of desperation; too often we almost pray with the attitude of wanting God to care about things we really don't care too much about.

iii. Desperate prayer has power not because it in itself persuades a reluctant God. Instead, it demonstrates that our heart cares passionately about the things God cares about, fulfilling Jesus' promise If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you. (Joh_15:7)

b. Enlighten my eyes: David had the wisdom to know that though he felt powerful feelings, he wasn't seeing reality. His vision was clouded and dark, so he cried out to God, “Enlighten my eyes.”

i. This was a great prayer. We need the light of God to shine upon us and to give us His wisdom and knowledge. No

matter what problem we are in, we should cry out with all our heart, "Enlighten my eyes."

ii. The Apostle Paul knew the importance of having our eyes enlightened by the Lord. This is what he prayed for Christians: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power. (Eph_1:17-19)

c. Lest I sleep the sleep of death: If we are not enlightened by God, we will surely fall asleep. And often, spiritual sleep leads to spiritual death.

i. Paul may have had this verse in mind when he wrote of our need for the light of Jesus: Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light. (Eph_5:14)

2. (Psa_13:4) David prays for victory over his enemies. Lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed against him"; Lest those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

a. Lest my enemy say: David knew one of the worst parts about losing to anyone is hearing them boast after they have defeated you. He did not want his enemy to rejoice when he was brought low.

b. Lest my enemy: "Awareness of God and the enemy is virtually the hallmark of every psalm of David; the positive and negative charges which produced the driving force of his best years." (Kidner) C. David's declaration.

1. (Psa_13:5 a) David's trust in God's mercy. But I have trusted in Your mercy;

a. I have trusted: David, after his prayer, came to a place of confidence and trust. I have trusted speaks in the past tense; it is as if David remembered that he really did trust God and he cleared away the fog from his sleepy eyes as God enlightened his eyes.

b. In Your mercy: At this place of discouragement, David could not trust in God's justice, or in God's law, or in God's holiness. Those things might condemn him because his feelings had made him not see clearly. But he could always trust in God's mercy. When you can't trust anything else, trust in God's mercy.

i. "He begins his prayer as if he thought God would never give him a kind look more ... But by the time he had exercised himself a little in duty, his distemper wears off, the mists scatter, and his faith breaks out as the sun in its strength." (William Gurnall, cited in Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_13:5-6 a) David's joy in the Lord and His salvation. My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord,

a. My heart shall rejoice: Now, David was still in the realm of feelings (rejoice). But he directed his feelings instead of having his feelings direct him (shall rejoice). He told his heart to get busy rejoicing!

b. In Your salvation: This is what David rejoiced in. David, if he could rejoice in nothing else, could rejoice in the salvation God gave him. This is solid ground for any believer. If you are saved, you can rejoice, and tell your heart to start rejoicing.

c. I will sing to the Lord: David knew rejoicing is wonderfully expressed in singing. So, he would sing to the Lord. Singing

to the Lord would both express his joy and increase his joy.

i. “There is not half enough singing in the world ... I remember a servant who used to sing while she was at the wash-tub. Her mistress said to her, ‘Why, Jane, how is it that you are always singing?’ She said, ‘It keeps the bad thoughts away.’” (Spurgeon)

ii. David moved from being depressed and feeling abandoned by God, to singing joy. “The fact that we feel abandoned itself means that we really know God is there. To be abandoned you need somebody to be abandoned by. Because we are Christians and have been taught by God in the Scriptures, we know that God still loves us and will be faithful to us, regardless of our feelings.” (Boice)

3. (Psa_13:6 b) With enlightened eyes, David sees God’s goodness. Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

a. Because He has dealt bountifully with me: As David thought about it, he had good reason to rejoice and sing because God had been good to him. If we will only think about it, every person on this earth has reason to rejoice, because in some way God has been good to everyone.

b. He has dealt bountifully with me: What a transition! In the beginning of the Psalm, David was overwhelmed by his feelings and believed that God forgot him and was hiding from him. He had trouble with God, with himself, and with others. Yet now he saw how God had dealt bountifully with him. Because his eyes were enlightened, David could now see God’s goodness, and what a change in perspective that was!

i. Before God can enlighten our eyes, we must agree that we don’t see everything. We need to realize that our feelings

are not giving us full and accurate information. But if we will do this, and cry out to the Lord, He will enlighten our eyes and bring us from a place of despair to a place of trust, joy, and confidence!

ii. “[In times of trouble, the Lord] would with one Scripture or another, strengthen me against all; insomuch that I have often said, Were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comfort’s sake.” (John Bunyan, cited in Spurgeon)

(Psa 13:2) How long must I worry,⁴ and suffer in broad daylight?⁵
How long will my enemy gloat over me?⁶

(Psa 13:3) Look at me!⁷ Answer me, O LORD my God!
Revive me,⁸ or else I will die!⁹

(Psa 13:4) Then¹⁰ my enemy will say, “I have defeated him!” Then¹¹ my foes will rejoice because I am upended.

(Psa 13:5) But I¹² trust in your faithfulness.
May I rejoice because of your deliverance!¹³

(Psa 13:6) I will sing praises¹⁴ to the LORD
when he vindicates me.¹⁵
(Psa 14:1) Psalm 141

For the music director; by David.

Fools say to themselves,² “There is no God.”³
They sin and commit evil deeds;⁴ none of them does what is right.⁵

(Guzik)

Psa 14:1-7

Psalms 14 – Fallen Man and a Faithful God

This Psalm is simply titled, “To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.” With this title, we have the author (David) and the intended audience (the Chief Musician), whom we can take to represent more than a choir leader such as Asaph; it looks to the ultimate Musician of the universe, God Himself. “The thought of the whole psalm is that the safety of godliness, and the peril of ungodliness.” (Morgan)

A. The sad condition of the man who rejects God.

1. (Psa_14:1) David’s analysis of the God-rejecting man. The fool has said in his heart,
“There is no God.”

They are corrupt,

They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.

a. The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God”: David looked at those who denied the existence of God and came to the conclusion that they are fools. The idea behind this ancient Hebrew word translated fool is more moral than intellectual. David did not have in mind those not smart enough to figure God out (no one is that smart); he had in mind those who simply reject God.

i. From the italics in the New King James Version we can see that what the fool actually says is, “No God.” “That is, ‘No God for me.’ So his is a practical as well as theoretical atheism. Not only does he not believe in God, he also acts on his conviction.” (Boice)

ii. David says this because of the plain evidence that there is a God; evidence in both creation and human conscience that Paul described in Romans 1. The fact that some men insist on denying the existence of God does not erase God from the universe; it instead speaks to their own standing as fools. As Paul wrote in Rom_1:22, Professing to be wise, they became fools.

iii. "The Hebrew word for fool in this psalm is nabal, a word which implies an aggressive perversity, epitomized in the Nabal of 1Sa_25:25." (Kidner)

iv. The God-denying man is a fool because:

- · He denies what is plainly evident.
- · He believes in tremendous effect with no cause.
- · He denies a moral authority in the universe.
- · He believes only what can be proven by the scientific method.
- · He takes a dramatic, losing chance on his supposition that there is no God.
- · He refuses to be persuaded by the many powerful arguments for the existence of God.

v. There are many powerful arguments for the existence of God; among them are these:

- · The Cosmological Argument: The existence of the universe means there must be a creator God.
- · The Teleological Argument: The existence of design in the universe means there must be a designer God.

- · The Anthropological Argument: The unique nature and character of humanity means there must be a relational God.

- · The Moral Argument: The existence of morality means there must be a governing God. vi. “Which is cause, and which is effect? Does atheism result from folly, or folly from atheism? It

would be perfectly correct to say that each is cause and each is effect.” (Morgan)

b. The fool has said in his heart: David not only found what the fool said to be significant; where he said it is also important (in his heart). The God-denying man David has in mind is not merely troubled by intellectual objections to the existence of God; in his heart he wishes God away, typically for fundamentally moral reasons.

i. Joh_3:20 explains it this way: For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

ii. This means that the man David had in mind is not an atheist for primarily intellectual reasons. “Honest intellectual agnosticism does not necessarily produce immorality; dishonest emotional atheism always does.” (Morgan)

iii. It means that when we speak with one who denies God, we should not only – or even primarily – speak to their head, but also to their heart. “Let the preacher aim at the heart, and preach the all conquering love of Jesus, and he will by God’s grace win more doubters to the faith of the gospel than any hundred of the best reasoners who only direct their arguments to the head.” (Spurgeon)

iv. The phrasing of said in his heart also reminds us that it is possible for one to say in his mind that there is a God, yet deny it in his heart and life. One may believe in God in theory, yet be a practical atheist in the way they live.

v. 1Sa_27:1 tells us what David said in his heart on one occasion: Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand.” Was this not David, in some sense, also denying God and speaking as a fool?

vi. “Practical denial or neglect of His working in the world, rather than a creed of negation, is in the psalmist’s mind. In effect, we say that there is no god when we shut Him up in a far-off heaven, and never think of Him as concerned in our affairs. To strip Him of His justice and rob Him of His control is the part of a fool. For the Biblical conception of folly is moral perversity rather than intellectual feebleness, and whoever is morally and religiously wrong cannot be in reality intellectually right.” (Maclaren)

c. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works: David here considers the result of denying God. It leads men into corruption and abominable works. This isn’t to say that every atheist lives a dissolute life and every God-believer lives a good life; yet there is a marked difference in moral behavior between those who take God seriously and those who do not.

d. There is none who does good: As David considered the sin of the God-denier, he looked out over the landscape of humanity and concluded that there is none who does good. He did not mean that there is no human good in this world;

but that fallen man is so fallen that he does not by instinct do good, and even the good he may do is tinged with evil.

- · We are born with both the will and the capacity to do evil; no one has to teach a child to do bad.

- · The path of least resistance usually leads us to bad, not good.

- · It is often easier to encourage others to do bad, instead of good.

- · Many of our good deeds are tinged with selfish, bad motives.

- i. “This is no exaggeration, since every sin implies the effrontery of supposedly knowing better than God, and the corruption of loving evil more than good.” (Kidner)

2. (Psa_14:2-3) Heaven’s analysis of fallen humanity.

The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men,
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.
They have all turned aside,

They have together become corrupt;

There is none who does good, No, not one.

- a. The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men: While man may wish to forget about God, God never forgets about man. He is always observing man, looking down from heaven upon the children of men.

- i. In man’s rejection of God, there is often the wish that God would just leave us alone. This is an unwise wish, because all human life depends upon God (Act_17:28; Mat_5:45).

This is an impossible wish, because God has rights of a creator over His creation.

ii. “The words remind us of God descending from heaven to observe the folly of those building the tower of Babel (Gen_11:5) or looking down upon the wickedness of the race prior to his judgment by the flood.” (Kidner)

b. To see if there are any who understand, who seek God: When God does look down from heaven, one thing He looks for is if there is any understanding or seeking among humanity.

i. God looks for this not primarily as an intellectual judgment; He doesn’t wonder if there are any smart enough to figure Him out. He looks for this more as a moral and spiritual judgment; if there are men who understand His heart and plan, and who seek Him for righteousness sake.

ii. We deceive ourselves into thinking that man, on his own, really does seek God. Don’t all the religion and rituals and practices from the beginning of time demonstrate that man does indeed seek God? Not at all. If man initiates the search then he doesn’t seek the true God, the God of the Bible. Instead he seeks an idol that he makes himself.

iii. “You have gone through this form of worship, but you have not sought after God. I am sick of this empty religiousness. We see it everywhere; it is not communion with God, it is not getting to God; indeed, God is not in it all.” (Spurgeon, from a sermon on Romans 3)

c. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt: When God looks, this is what He finds. He finds that man has turned away from God, and has therefore become corrupt.

i. Poole on turned aside: “Or, are grown sour, as this word signifies, Hos_4:18. And so this is a metaphor from corrupted drinks, as the next [become corrupt] is taken from rotten meat.”

ii. “The Hebrews have the same word for sin and a dead carcase; and again the same word for sin and stench.” (Trapp)

d. There is none who does good, no, not one: When God finds none who does good, it is because there are none. It isn’t as if there were some and God couldn’t see them. David here observes and remembers that man is truly, profoundly, deeply fallen.

i. David’s use of “there is none who does good” suddenly broadens the scope beyond the atheist to include us. “ ‘After all, we are not atheists!’ we might say. But now, as we are let in on God’s perspective, we see that we are too included. In other words, the outspoken atheist of Psa_14:1 is only one example of mankind in general.” (Kidner)

ii. “What a picture of our race is this! Save only where grace reigns, there is none that doeth good; humanity, fallen and debased, is a desert without an oasis, a night without a star, a dunghill without a jewel, a hell without a bottom.” (Spurgeon)

B. God’s defense of His righteous people.

1. (Psa_14:4-6) God defends the generation of the righteous.
Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge,
Who eat up my people as they eat bread, And do not call on the Lord?
There they are in great fear,

For God is with the generation of the righteous. You shame
the counsel of the poor,
But the Lord is his refuge.

a. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge: David first considered the profound fallenness of man; now he deals with the fate of God's people in such a fallen world. God's people might seem like the weak fools, but David understood that it is the workers of iniquity who have no knowledge.

i. "The question has almost a tone of surprise, as if even Omniscience found matter of wonder in men's mysterious love of evil." (Maclaren)

b. Who eat up my people as they eat bread: It looks like the workers of iniquity are strong and have the upper hand. David wondered if the people of God are abandoned to the fools and the corrupt of this world; to those who do not call on the Lord.

i. "As they eat bread, *i.e.* with as little regret or remorse, and with as much greediness, and delight, and constancy too, as they use to eat their meat." (Poole)

ii. And do not call on the Lord: "Practical atheism is, of course, prayerless." (Maclaren)

c. There they are in great fear, for God is with the generation of the righteous: After asking the question, David now answers it with great wisdom. The workers of iniquity seem strong and confident, but they are actually in great fear, because they can't erase the consciousness that God is with the generation of the righteous.

i. “A panic terror seized them: ‘they feared a fear,’ as the Hebrew puts it; an undefinable, horrible, mysterious dread crept over them. The most hardened of men have their periods when conscience casts them into a cold sweat of alarm.” (Spurgeon)

ii. As strong as they may wish to deny it, they live under the cloud of knowing that they are battling against God, and can therefore never win.

d. You shame the counsel of the poor, but the Lord is his refuge: David here announces it to the workers of iniquity previously mentioned; that they may work against the poor, but God has a refuge for them that cannot be breached. You are fighting against God and will never succeed.

i. Spurgeon considered the ways that the poor takes counsel.

- · He takes counsel with his own weakness, and sees that he must depend upon God.

- · He takes counsel with his observations, and sees the end of the wicked.

- · He takes counsel with the Bible, and trusts it to be the Word of God.

- · He takes counsel with his own experience and sees that God answers prayer.

ii. Spurgeon used this verse to consider the ways that Christians should stand strong though they are shamed and mocked by the workers of iniquity. “You young men in the great firms of London, you working men that work in the factories — you are sneered at. Let them sneer. If they can

sneer you out of your religion, you have not got any worth having. Remember you can be laughed into hell, but you can never be laughed out of it.” (Spurgeon)

iii. “‘Oh! but they will point at you.’ Cannot you bear to be pointed at? ‘But they will chaff you.’ Chaff — let them chaff you. Can that hurt a man that is a man? If you are a molluscous creature that has no backbone, you may be afraid of jokes, and jeers, and jests; but if God has made you upright, stand upright and be a man.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_14:7) Longing for the Lord’s salvation.

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord brings back the captivity of His people, Let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.

a. Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! David knew that the Lord was a refuge for His people and that the workers of iniquity would never win. Yet that was hard to see at the present time, so David expressed his great longing that God would bring the victory and deliverance He had promised to His people.

b. When the Lord brings back the captivity of His people: This was not the Babylonian Captivity, many generations after David’s time. Here captivity is used in a general sense, speaking of any time or situation where God’s people are oppressed and bound.

i. “We take that phrase ‘turns the captivity’ in the sense in which it admittedly bears in Job_42:10 and Eze_16:53, namely that of deliverance from misfortune.” (Maclaren)

c. Let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad: David anticipates the coming deliverance, and calls the people of God to be joyful in consideration of it.

(Psa 14:2) The LORD looks down from heaven⁶ at the human race,⁷ to see if there is anyone who is wise⁸ and seeks God.⁹

(Psa 14:3) Everyone rejects God;¹⁰ they are all morally corrupt.¹¹
None of them does what is right,¹² not even one!

(Psa 14:4) All those who behave wickedly¹³ do not understand — ¹⁴ those who devour my people as if they were eating bread,
and do not call out to the LORD.

(Psa 14:5) They are absolutely terrified,¹⁵ for God defends the godly.¹⁶

(Psa 14:6) You want to humiliate the oppressed,¹⁷ even though¹⁸ the LORD is their¹⁹ shelter.

(Psa 14:7) I wish the deliverance²⁰ of Israel would come from Zion!

When the LORD restores the well-being of his people,²¹ may Jacob rejoice,²²

may Israel be happy!²³

(Psa 15:1) Psalm 151

A psalm of David.

LORD, who may be a guest in your home?²
Who may live on your holy hill?³

(Guzik)

Psa 15:1-5

Psalms 15 – The Character of the One God Receives

This Psalm is simply titled, A Psalm of David. In it, David meditates over the character of the man received into the presence of God. We have no precise occasion for this Psalm, but it may well have been on the bringing of the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6). This was a time when David was very much concerned with the questions asked and answered in this Psalm.

A. The question presented: Who can come before God?

1. (Psa_15:1 a) Who can come to the tabernacle of God? Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle?

a. Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? In one sense, David's question here is figurative. Though he, like the sons of Korah, may have wished to live in the house God (Psa_84:2-4; Psa_84:10), it was at the same time impossible for him because David was not a priest.

i. The word translated abide can be better thought of as sojourn; it describes a visit, receiving the hospitality of a tent-dwelling host. This opening is understood in light of the customs of hospitality in the ancient near east.

ii. "In the gracious hospitality of the antique world, a guest was sheltered from all harm; his person was inviolable, his wants all met. So the guest of Jehovah is safe, can claim asylum from every foe and share in all the bountiful provision of His abode." (Maclaren)

b. Abide in Your tabernacle: The tabernacle of God was the great tent of meeting that God told Moses and Israel to build for Him during the Exodus (Exodus 25-31). This tabernacle

survived through several centuries, and at David's time seems to have been at Gibeon (1Ch_16:39-40).

i. Since the tabernacle was the place where man met with God through the administration of the priests and sacrifice, David's longing to abide in Your tabernacle is actually a desire to abide in the presence of God.

ii. David has in mind the life that lives in the presence of God; who walks in close fellowship with God because the heart, the mind, and the life are all in step with the heart, mind, and life of God.

2. (Psa_15:1 b) Who can come to the hill of God's temple? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?

a. Who may dwell in Your holy hill? In one sense, David here simply uses the Hebrew technique of repetition to ask the same question as in the first part of the verse.

i. The word dwell here has a more permanent sense than the word abide in the previous line. It is as if David wrote, "Who may be received as a guest into God's tent, enjoying all the protections of His hospitality? Who may live as a citizen in His holy hill?"

b. Your holy hill: Yet in another sense, David asks a second, more intense question. At this time, the tabernacle of God was at Gibeon (1Ki_3:4). Depending upon when David wrote this Psalm, it may very well be that the ark of the covenant was in Jerusalem (2Sa_6:17) and even at the holy hill of Moriah, where God had told David to build the temple (2Sa_24:18-21; 1Ch_21:28 to 1Ch_22:5).

i. Since the tabernacle was not at God's holy hill in David's time (though the ark of the covenant was), David has two different – yet similar in meaning – places in mind.

B. The character of the one who can come before God.

1. (Psa_15:2-3) His character among his friends and neighbors. He who walks uprightly,
And works righteousness,

And speaks the truth in his heart;

He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor,
Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend;

a. He who walks uprightly: In describing the character of the man who can live in God's presence David begins with two general descriptions (walks uprightly, and works righteousness).

i. In one sense David speaks from an Old Covenant perspective. Though the Old Covenant gave an important place to sacrifice and atonement through blood, it also based blessing and cursing on obedience (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28). The disobedient could not expect blessing, including the blessing of God's presence.

ii. The New Covenant gives us a different ground for blessing and relationship with God: the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Under the New Covenant, faith and not performance is basis for blessing.

iii. Nevertheless, David's principle is also accurate under the New Covenant in this sense: the conduct of one's life is a reflection of their fellowship with God. As John wrote: If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the fresh (1Jn_1:6). We might say that under the Old Covenant a righteous walk was the precondition for fellowship with God; under the New

Covenant a righteous walk is the result of fellowship with God, founded on faith.

iv. “The Christian answer to the psalmist’s question goes deeper than his, but is fatally incomplete unless it include his and lay the same stress on duties to men.” (Maclaren)

v. “David responds to the question of verse 1 with representative answers. This means that the items listed in verse 2-5 are not all-inclusive.” (Boice) We also see this from similar passages such as Psa_24:3-4 and Isa_33:14-17, which are not identical in the items listed.

b. Speaks the truth in his heart; he who does not backbite with his tongue: David here understood that an upright and righteous life is known by the way someone speaks. As Jesus said in Mat_12:34 : Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

i. “I think more damage has been done to the church and its work by gossip, criticism, and slander than by any other single sin. So I say, don’t do it. Bite your tongue before you criticize another Christian.” (Boice)

ii. Clarke wrote this about the word backbite: “He is a knave, who would rob you of your good name; he is a coward, that would speak of you in your absence what he dared not to do in your presence; and only an ill-conditioned dog would fly at and bite your back when your face was turned. All these three ideas are included in the term; and they all meet in the detractor and calumniator. His tongue is the tongue of a knave, a coward, and a dog.”

c. Nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend: David also knew that righteousness is expressed in the way we treat one another.

We might have thought David would give greater priority to religious obligations such as sacrifice or purification ceremonies – which certainly have their place, but are useless without the practical godliness of being good and honest and honorable to neighbors and friends.

i. In these words of David we also see the deeper work of Jesus Christ, who commanded us to not only love our neighbor and friend, but also to love our enemies and those who spitefully use us (Mat_5:44).

2. (Psa_15:4-5 a) His character among difficult people. In whose eyes a vile person is despised,
But he honors those who fear the Lord;

He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; He who does not put out his money at usury,
Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

a. In whose eyes a vile person is despised: David knew that we cannot love good unless we also oppose evil. As it says in Psa_97:10 : The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. Yet this righteous man also honors those who fear the Lord; he makes his judgments about men on a godly basis, not a from favoritism, flattery, or corruption.

i. “Who rejected the wicked, however rich and honourable; and chose the well inclined, however poor and contemptible in the world.” (Horne)

ii. “He doth not admire his person, nor envy his condition, nor court him with flatteries, nor value his company and conversation, nor approve of or comply with his courses; but he thinks meanly

of him; he judgeth him a most miserable man, and a great object of pity he abhors his wicked practices, and labours to make such ways contemptible and hateful to all men as far as it lies in his power.” (Poole)

iii. Honors those who fear the Lord: “We must be as honest in paying respect as in paying our bills. Honour to whom honour is due. To all good men we owe a debt of honour, and we have no right to hand over what is their due to vile persons who happen to be in high places.” (Spurgeon)

b. He who swears to his own hurt and does not change: The idea behind this is the man keeps his promises even when it is no longer in his advantage to do so.

i. “Joshua and the elders kept their oath to the Gibeonites, though to their inconvenience.” (Trapp)

ii. “The law prohibited the substitution of another animal sacrifice for that which had been vowed (Lev_27:10); and the psalm uses the same word for ‘changeth,’ with evident allusion to the prohibition, which must therefore have been known to the psalmist.” (Maclaren)

c. He who does not put out his money at usury, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent: David described the man who is concerned to live a righteous life when it comes to money. Many people who would be considered godly in other areas of their life still have not decided to use their money in a way that honors God and shows love and care to others.

i. Usury “is condemned in the Bible, not in general (cf. Deu_23:20; Mat_25:27) but in the context of trading on a brother’s misfortunes, as a comparison between Deu_23:19 and Lev_25:35-38 makes clear.” (Kidner)

ii. "I am convinced that the concern of this verse is not with receiving interest for money loaned, though it seems to say that, but rather with whom the interest is taken from. In other words, the verse concerns greed eclipsing justice... . The best Old Testament illustration of the abuse verse 5 is talking about is in Nehemiah 5, where all the wealthy were taking advantage of the poor among the exiles when all should have been helping one another." (Boice)

iii. It is easy – and proper – to look at this list and see where we fall short. Yet seeing our sin in this Psalm should drive us to Jesus. We see this whole Psalm through the grid of the New Covenant; we see Jesus as having perfectly fulfilled the requirements of the law and the standards of this Psalm. We see that by faith His obedience is accounted as ours, and that we are being transformed into His image so that the fulfillment of this Psalm should more and more mark our life.

3. (Psa_15:5 b) The blessing that comes from this character. He who does these things shall never be moved.

a. He who does these things: David has in mind the basic performance-based system of the Old Covenant. The one who has pleased God with this kind performance can expect blessing from God.

i. "To continue in sin is to frustrate the very purpose of God in grace. To do that is to be excluded from His tent, to be shut out from the holy mountain." (Morgan)

b. Shall never be moved: In the Old Covenant system, this stability of life is a blessing from God given to the obedient. Under the New Covenant the promise of stability and security is given to those who abide in faith, such faith being evident through a life lived in general obedience.

i. The idea behind shall never be moved is that this righteous one will be a guest in the tent of God forever (as in Psa_61:4). In New Testament words we could express it like this: And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. (1Jn_2:17)

(Psa 15:2) Whoever lives a blameless life,⁴ does what is right,
and speaks honestly.⁵

(Psa 15:3) He⁶ does not slander,⁷ or do harm to others,⁸
or insult his neighbor.⁹

(Psa 15:4) He despises a reprobate,¹⁰
but honors the LORD's loyal followers.¹¹
He makes firm commitments and does not renege on his
promise.¹²

(Psa 15:5) He does not charge interest when he lends his
money.¹³

He does not take bribes to testify against the innocent.¹⁴

The one who lives like this¹⁵ will never be upended.

(Psa 16:1) Psalm 16¹

A prayer² of David.

Protect me, O God, for I have taken shelter in you.³ (Guzik)

Psa 16:1-11

Psalms 16 – The Benefits of a Life-Commitment to God

This Psalm is titled, A Michtam of David. The title Michtam is commonly understood as golden; though others think it is related to a word meaning to cover. Since the Psalms with this title (16, 56-60) are written from times of peril, some think the idea is of covering the lips in the sense of secrecy, as if this were a secret or silent Psalm given in a time of

crisis. This is a wonderful Psalm relating how David found the secret of contentment and great gladness even in pressing times; and also speaks powerfully of Jesus and His work for us.

A. David's confidence in God.

1. (Psa_16:1-3) What David's soul said to the Lord. Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.
O my soul, you have said to the Lord,

"You are my Lord,

My goodness is nothing apart from You." As for the saints who are on the earth,

"They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."

a. Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust: It seems that David wrote this Psalm from a time of trouble, because he asked for preservation, took confidence in that he would not be moved (Psa_16:8), and had confidence in some kind of resurrection (Psa_16:10). Yet the tone of this Psalm is not despair or complaint; it is settled joy. Despite his trouble, David had a praising confidence in his God.

i. "This was a most powerful plea, for to trust God is the highest honour we can do him, it is to set the crown upon his head." (Trapp)

ii. "Specially present the prayer in a spiritual sense. Preserve me from the world; let me not be carried away with its excitements; suffer me not to be before its blandishments, nor to fear its frowns. Preserve me, from the devil; let him not tempt me above what I am able to bear. Preserve me from myself; keep me from growing envious, selfish, high-minded, proud, slothful. Preserve me from those evils into

which I see others run, and preserve me, from those evils into which I am myself most apt to run; keep me, from evils, known and from evils unknown.” (Spurgeon)

b. You are my Lord: This is what David’s soul had said to the Lord. David happily said that Yahweh (Lord) was his master (Lord).

i. David knew how to speak to his own soul; Psa_42:6; Psa_43:5 are other examples. It is a good thing to speak good things to our own soul.

c. My goodness is nothing apart from You: David knew that at his very best – all of his goodness – was nothing apart from God.

- · It was nothing when it came to making David righteous before God; he needed God to bring His righteousness to David.

- · It was nothing because David’s goodness was itself a gift of God; therefore apart from Him it was nothing.

- · It was nothing because David’s goodness, as precious as it was, was of small value without his relationship with God.

i. “I receive all good from thee, but no good can I return to thee; wherefore I acknowledge thee to be most rich, and myself to be most beggardly.” (Greenham, cited in Spurgeon)

d. As for the saints who are on the earth: David proclaimed regarding God’s people on this earth, “They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.” David delighted in the people of God, despite all their failings, scandals, and embarrassments.

i. This is an obvious failing for many followers of Jesus Christ today. They are so negative about the people of God that they find themselves unable to see any excellence in the God's people, unable to delight in them.

ii. "This is a practical matter, for it is a way by which we can measure our relationship to the Lord. Do you love other Christians? Do you find it good and rewarding to be with them? Do you seek their company? This is a simple test. Those who love the Lord will love the company of those who also love him." (Boice)

2. (Psa_16:4-6) The folly of idolatry and the blessing of honoring the Lord. Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god;

Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, Nor take up their names on my lips.

O Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup;

You maintain my lot.

The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places;

Yes, I have a good inheritance.

a. Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god: David understood that those who served other gods found many sorrows in life.

i. David knew that his life, lived after God, was not an easy one. He experienced many hardships because he remained faithful to God. Nevertheless, he also knew that life lived after another god was even more difficult. It was the attitude of Peter in Joh_6:66-69, when he said "Lord, to whom shall we go?"

ii. “There is a distinct echo of the story of the Fall in the phrase, multiply their sorrows, since very similar words were spoken to Eve in the Hebrew of Gen_3:16. There could hardly be a more ominous allusion to what follows from apostasy.” (Kidner)

b. Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer: David allowed his knowledge of the futility of pagan beliefs to effect his behavior. Therefore, he would not follow the pagans in their vain practices.

i. “Many heathens sacrificed to their idols (that is, to devils) with man’s blood, against all laws of humanity and piety.” (Trapp) In addition, the priests of Baal offered their own blood to their false god; some Roman Catholics and Muslims also whip themselves to blood, offering their blood to their twisted conception of God.

c. O Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot: After stating that there was nothing found in the pagan gods, David explained the good he received from Yahweh.

i. You are the portion of my inheritance: David was the youngest son in a family with many sons. He could expect no inheritance from his family; yet he took joy and comfort in the fact that God was the portion of his inheritance, and he knew that he had a good inheritance. The lines that marked out his inheritance had fallen to him in pleasant places.

ii. God said to the priests in the days of Moses: “I am your portion and your inheritance” (Num_18:20). David understood that this was a promise given not only to the priests, but also to all who would trust God to be the portion of their inheritance. “Every godly man has the same

possession and the same prohibitions as the priests had. Like them he is landless, and instead of estates had Jehovah.” (Maclaren)

iii. You maintain my lot: This described the portion of David’s inheritance. David was confident that God would maintain what He had first given to him.

iv. This attitude did not come easily or always to David. He complained to Saul in 1Sa_26:19 : for they have driven me out this day from sharing in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, “Go, serve other gods.” Yet here in this Psalm he comes back to the conclusion that the Lord is his inheritance and will maintain his lot.

v. David’s words here speak of contentment. He is content with what God has given him. A mark of our age – especially with the Baby Boom generation and perhaps even more with those following – is discontentment, boredom, and restlessness. A generation with short attention spans, the constant need for excitement and adrenaline rushes, and 24-hour a day entertainment needs to know by experience what David knew.

B. The benefits of David’s confidence.

1. (Psa_16:7-8) The benefits of guidance and security. I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel;
My heart also instructs me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me;
Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

a. I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel: The false gods of the nations could never give counsel the way the Lord gave it to David. When David needed guidance, God gave it to him, and therefore David praised God.

b. My heart also instructs me in the night seasons: This was because David's heart was instructed first by God and His Word, and therefore could also instruct him in the ways of God. This is an example of the benefits that come from the transformation of thinking spoken of in Rom_12:1-2.

i. The Psalms also know that it can be vain to stay up late to try and figure your problems (Psa_127:1-2). Yet David knew the joy of communing with God in the night seasons and receiving guidance from Him.

ii. "Methinks I hear a sweet still voice within me, saying, This is the way, walk in it; and this in the night season, when I am wrapped in rest and silence." (Trapp)

c. I have set the Lord always before me: This speaks of a decision David made to put God first in his life. He determined that God would always be his focus, his perspective.

i. In the ultimate sense, only Jesus did this perfectly. He was always in the intimate presence of His Father. "The method taken by Christ, as man, to support himself in time of trouble, and persevere unto the end, was to maintain a constant and actual sense of the presence of Jehovah, whom when he thus saw standing at his right hand, ready, at the appointed hour, to succor and deliver him, he then feared not the powers of earth and hell combined for his destruction." (Horne)

ii. "That effort of faith is the very life of devotion... . God is only ours in reality when we are conscious of His nearness, and that is strange love of Him which is content to pass days without ever setting Him before itself." (Maclaren)

d. Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved: This was the plain result of David's decision to put God first. There was a standing and security in David's life that would not have otherwise existed.

2. (Psa_16:9-11) The benefits of joy and preservation. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.

For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,

Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;

At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

a. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices: David continued to describe the benefits of his decision to set the Lord always before him (Psa_16:8). This decision brought a gladness and a glory to David's life.

i. For those who do not live out a true commitment to God, it is easy for them to think of what such a commitment costs them. This is not entirely bad, because this kind of decision to set the Lord always before one's self does have a cost, and the cost should be counted and appreciated. It may cost certain pleasures, popularity, anonymity, family relationships, life goals, career choices, financial priorities, and so forth.

ii. Yet David also tells us some of the benefits of such a life decision: my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices. There was happiness and a glory David knew by this life commitment that he would not have known otherwise.

iii. David could maturely understand both the costs and the benefits, and sing a song of praise about his life decision.

b. My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol: David described a further benefit of his life decision to set the Lord always before him. It was the confidence of God's care and blessing in the life beyond. David had the settled hope (a confidence, not a simple wish), that God would not leave his soul in the grave (Sheol), but that his life would continue on in the presence of God.

i. This statement is a wonderful declaration of trust in some sort of resurrection and afterlife. Yet the Psalms contain both such confident statements and other more doubtful words about the life beyond (such as in Psa_6:5; Psa_88:11). This cloudy understanding of the afterlife in the Old Testament does not surprise the reader of the New Testament, who knows that Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light (2Ti_1:10).

c. Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption: Wonderfully (and perhaps unknowingly), David spoke beyond himself. In one sense David was indeed the Holy One of God, whose soul would not be left in the grave. Yet in a greater and more literal sense, only Jesus Christ fulfills this in His resurrection.

i. This was perceived by Peter on the Day of Pentecost, who said that these words went beyond David who was obviously dead, buried in a grave, and whose body had long ago decayed into dust (Act_2:25-31).

ii. In quoting and applying this passage from Psalms 16 to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, Peter showed a remarkably sophisticated understanding of the work of Jesus

on the cross. He understood that because Jesus bore our sin without becoming a sinner, He remained the Holy One, even in His death. Since it is incomprehensible that God's Holy One should be bound by death, the resurrection was absolutely inevitable. As Peter said: It was not possible that He should be held by death (Act_2:24).

iii. The fact that Jesus remained God's Holy One despite the ordeal of the cross demonstrates that Jesus bore the penalty of human sin without becoming a sinner Himself. It also shows that this payment of sins was perfect and complete, the only type of payment a Holy One could make. In these ways (as Peter understood), the resurrection proves the perfection of Jesus' work on the cross.

iv. We might imagine Jesus taking this promise to Himself in the agony before and during the crucifixion, and even afterwards. "It was as though our Lord had stayed his soul upon these words as He left this world and entered the unseen... . He sang, as He went, this hymn of immortal hope." (Meyer)

d. You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy: With these words David seemed to understand that the benefits of this life commitment to God were received in both this life, and the life beyond.

i. The path of life is something enjoyed by the believer both now, and in eternity. God gives us eternal life to enjoy as a present gift, extending into eternity.

ii. In Your presence is fullness of joy: This was a joy David could experience now (in the context of his previously mentioned gladness and rejoicing), but also ultimately receive when in the more immediate presence of God.

iii. Peter also quoted these lines in his message on the Day of Pentecost. They show that instead of being punished for His glorious work on the cross, Jesus was rewarded, as prophetically described in the Psalm.

e. At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore: David had full confidence that his life with God – both now and forevermore – would be marked by the highest and best pleasures. This is life lived above shallow entertainments and excitements.

i. These pleasures are enjoyed at a place: “We are also told that heaven is to be enjoyed at the right hand of God. The right hand, even on earth, is the place of favor, and the place of honor, and they place of security. The right-hand place is always regarded as the place of dignity and nobility in all courts. God is not going to give his people any left-handed heaven, but they are to dwell at his right hand for evermore.”

ii. At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore: This tells that both in this life and the life beyond, true pleasures forevermore are found at the right hand of God, not in separation from Him.

iii. In his fictional work *The Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis wrote in the voice of a senior devil, complaining about the “unfair advantage” that God has against the devils as they do their dark work: “He’s a hedonist at heart. All those fasts and vigils and stakes and crosses are only a façade. Or only like foam on the sea shore. Out at sea, out in His sea, there is pleasure, and more pleasure. He makes no secret of it; at His right hand are ‘pleasures for evermore’. Ugh! I don’t think He has the least inkling of that high and austere mystery to which we rise in

the Miserific Vision. He's vulgar, Wormwood. He has a bourgeois mind. He has filled His world full of pleasures. There are things for humans to do all day long without His minding in the least—sleeping, washing, eating, drinking, making love, playing, praying, working, Everything has to be twisted before it's any use to us. We fight under cruel disadvantages. Nothing is naturally on our side."

iv. The conclusion of this Psalm is especially wonderful when we consider how it began. "The refugee of verse 1 finds himself an heir, and his inheritance beyond all imagining and all exploring." (Kidner)

v. When we go back to the first verse, we remember that this life of gladness and rejoicing and fullness of joy is not a problem-free life. It is a life that may be challenged, and face attack on many levels. Yet in that a life commitment to God has been made and is enjoyed, it is a secure, happy, blessed life.

(Psa 16:2) I say to the LORD, "You are the Lord, my only source of well-being."⁴

(Psa 16:3) As for God's chosen people who are in the land, and the leading officials I admired so much⁵ —

(Psa 16:4) their troubles multiply, they desire other gods.⁶
I will not pour out drink offerings of blood to their gods,⁷ nor will I make vows in the name of their gods.⁸

(Psa 16:5) LORD, you give me stability and prosperity;⁹ you make my future secure.¹⁰

(Psa 16:6) It is as if I have been given fertile fields or received a beautiful tract of land.¹¹

(Psa 16:7) I will praise¹² the LORD who¹³ guides¹⁴ me;

yes, during the night I reflect and learn.¹⁵

(Psa 16:8) I constantly trust in the LORD;¹⁶
because he is at my right hand, I will not be upended.

(Psa 16:9) So my heart rejoices and I am happy;¹⁷
My life is safe.¹⁸

(Psa 16:10) You will not abandon me¹⁹ to Sheol;²⁰
you will not allow your faithful follower²¹ to see²² the Pit.²³

(Psa 16:11) You lead me in²⁴ the path of life;²⁵
I experience absolute joy in your presence;²⁶ you always
give me sheer delight.²⁷

(Psa 17:1) Psalm 17¹

A prayer of David.

LORD, consider my just cause!²
Pay attention to my cry for help! Listen to the prayer
I sincerely offer!³

(Guzik)
Psa 17:1-15

Psalms 17 – Shelter Under the Shadow of His Wings

The title of this Psalm is simply, A Prayer of David. We can't place it to a specific time in David's life, because there are too many possible points where this connects with his general circumstances. This Psalm is remarkable for its trust in God, its lack of confidence in self, and in its glorious heavenly hope.

A. A plea to be heard in time of crisis.

1. (Psa_17:1-2) David presents his cause to the Lord. Hear a just cause, O Lord,
Attend to my cry;

Give ear to my prayer which is not from deceitful lips. Let my vindication come from Your presence;
Let Your eyes look on the things that are upright.

a. Hear a just cause, O Lord: As is common in the Psalms, David again prayed from a time of crisis. Here he began his appeal to God by declaring the justice of his cause. He believed God had every reason to attend to his cry because his cause was just.

i. It is entirely possible for someone to think that their cause is just when it is not; or for both parties in a fight to each be absolutely convinced that their own cause is just. We cannot automatically take these words of David to ourselves and immediately judge our cause as just.

ii. Yet we can look at our cause as impartially and dispassionately as possible, looking at it from the perspective of others to the best of our ability, and be more concerned with what is truly just than simply what favors us.

iii. "A cry is our earliest utterance, and in many ways the most natural of human sounds; if our prayer should like the infant's cry be more natural than intelligent, and more earnest than elegant, it will be none the less eloquent with God. There is a mighty power in a child's cry to prevail with a parent's heart." (Spurgeon)

b. Give ear to my prayer which is not from deceitful lips: Even as David was convinced regarding the justice of his cause, he was also careful to speak honestly about his problem. The idea is that David has not deceived so as to

deserve his current problem, and that he was not withholding facts that would undermine his cause.

i. In Psa_139:23-24 David prayed: Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. This wonderful prayer – to know one’s own heart and hidden motives and sins – is the kind of thing that David prayed before he prayed this Psalm. He comes to God in Psalms 17 with some confidence through a tested conscience.

ii. Deceitful lips: “They have Jacob’s voice, but Esau’s hands; they profess like saints, but practise like Satans; they have their long prayers, but short prayings.” (Bales, cited in Spurgeon)

c. Let my vindication come from Your presence: David did not want a vindication that came from himself. In his long struggle with King Saul, David had several opportunities to set things right himself, but he refused all waited until vindication came from the presence of God.

i. This was an important way that David left his problem to the Lord. “God, I refuse to take matters into my own hands. I will wait for vindication to come from Your presence; I want to know that this is Your work and not mine.”

d. Let Your eyes look on the things that are upright: David phrased his request in a way that put more emphasis upon God’s justice than on his own cause. He did believe that his cause was just; but he spoke in a manner that gave more importance to the things that are upright.

i. David’s idea was something like this: “Lord, I believe my cause is just and I have searched my own heart for deceit.

Yet I wait for Your vindication, and I want You to do and to promote what is right. If I'm not on Your side, move me so that I am."

ii. "I desire nothing that is unreasonable or unjust, but that thou wouldst judge righteously between me and mine enemies, and vindicate my own honour and faithfulness in making good thy promise to me." (Poole)

2. (Psa_17:3-4) A plea from a tested heart. You have tested my heart;

You have visited me in the night;

You have tried me and have found nothing;

I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.
Concerning the works of men,
By the word of Your lips,

I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer.

a. You have tested my heart: David invited the test in the previous verses; here he speaks having passed the test (You have tried me and have found nothing).

i. Clarke assumes (probably rightly) that this Psalm comes from the context of Saul hunting David. "Thou hast seen me in my most secret retirements, and knowest whether I have plotted mischief against him who now wishes to take away my life." (Clarke)

ii. It takes some level of patience and maturity to let God test one's heart in this manner. We must accept the fact that we might be wrong and that someone else may be right in the matter. We

must be more interested in God's justice and His standard of right and wrong than we are in winning our cause. We must come to God and His word with a heart ready to be convicted and corrected.

iii. It is a worthy question for all to ask: "Do I allow God to test my heart? Can I be corrected? Will I listen to others when they tell me that I may be wrong?"

iv. David did allow God to test his heart, and therefore he came with great confidence in prayer. "Open and unconfessed sin is a great prayer barrier. An upright life is a strong basis for appeals." (Boice)

v. Boice suggests these questions for examining our heart before prayer:

- · Are we being disobedient?
- · Are we being selfish?
- · Are we neglecting some important duty?
- · Is there a wrong we should first make right?
- · Are our priorities in order?

b. I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress: David was careful to not speak in a sinful way about his crisis. He could speak in a way that might deceive others or himself, and promote his own cause at the expense of God's justice; yet David purposed that it would not be so.

i. "The strong professions of heart-cleanness and outward obedience which follows are not so much denials of any sin as avowals of sincere devotion and honest submission of life to God's law." (Maclaren)

c. By the word of Your lips, I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer: This was one reason why David was good at this kind of strong self-analysis. He lived by the words of God's lips; he knew and loved and lived God's word.

i. It was this word that tried David and found nothing. It was this word that gave David the wisdom and the strength to keep away from the paths of the destroyer. The idea is not so much a path where David would destroy, but a path where David would become a destroyer.

ii. David learned and displayed this lesson over and over again during his long crisis with King Saul. David had to protect himself, his family, and his men from Saul without becoming himself a twisted, self-interested destroyer like Saul.

B. A plea for protection.

1. (Psa_17:5) Hold up my steps. Uphold my steps in Your paths, That my footsteps may not slip.

a. Uphold my steps: David felt that he was in danger of falling or slipping into disaster; he needed God to hold up his steps, so that his footsteps may not slip.

i. "The word of God affords us direction, but the grace of God must enable us to follow its direction, and that grace must be obtained by prayer." (Horne)

ii. "What! Slip in God's ways? Yes, the road is good, but our feet are evil, and therefore slip, even on the King's highway." (Spurgeon)

b. In Your paths: This again shows the significant humility of David's prayer. He wants to be upheld, but only on God's

paths. Included in this is the unspoken prayer, “Lord, if I am not on Your path, please put me there. I want to be in Your paths, not my own.”

2. (Psa_17:6-9) Keep me safe by Your power.

I have called upon You, for You will hear me, O God; Incline Your ear to me, and hear my speech.

Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand,

O You who save those who trust in You From those who rise up against them. Keep me as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings,

From the wicked who oppress me,
From my deadly enemies who surround me.

a. I have called upon You, for You will hear me: David’s calm confidence in the midst of his crisis is encouraging. Though his problems were not gone yet, he still was confident that God would hear when he called.

i. Boice explained how this Psalm is a great pattern of prayer. “It models prayer by the way the psalmist uses arguments to make his appeal to God. He does not merely ask for what he wants or needs. He argues his case, explaining to God what God should answer.”

ii. We don’t make such arguments in prayer because we can, through brilliant or persuasive arguments, convince God to do something that He doesn’t really want to do. Instead, it is “because arguments force us to carefully think through what we are asking and to sharpen our requests.” (Boice)

b. Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand: This is the first appearance in the Psalms of the wonderful

word, lovingkindness. David asked that this special love be shown to him by the special power of God (Your right hand).

i. Kidner on lovingkindness: “Steadfast love, or ‘true love’ (neb) is that faithfulness to a covenant, to which marital devotion gives some analogy. It is the word which older versions translated ‘lovingkindness’, before its connection with covenanting and its strong element of fidelity were fully appreciated.”

ii. “This is the love by which he enters into a favorable relationship with his people, promising to be their God.” (Boice)

iii. Yet David spoke of more than lovingkindness here; he spoke of marvelous lovingkindness, and that by Your right hand. “The wonder of extraordinary love is that God should make it such an ordinary thing, that he should give to us ‘marvellous lovingkindness,’ and yet should give it so often that it becomes a daily blessing, and yet remains marvellous still.” (Spurgeon)

iv. Many of us ask for or only expect God’s moderate lovingkindness. We make our prayers, our faith, and our expectations small. David here shows us a pattern to expect and ask from God marvelous lovingkindness.

v. “Do you not see that you have been a marvellous sinner? Marvellously ungrateful have you been; marvellously have you aggravated your sins; marvellously did you kick against a mother’s tears; marvellously did you defy a father’s counsels; marvellously have you laughed at death; marvellously have you made a covenant with death and a league with hell... . ‘Oh!’ saith he, ‘God will never have mercy on me; it is too great a thing to hope, too great a

wonder to expect!’ Young man, here is a new prayer for you, ‘Show thy marvellous lovingkindness.’” (Spurgeon)

c. Keep me as the apple of Your eye: The phrase “apple of Your eye” was used to describe something precious, easily injured and demanding protection. David wanted to be kept by God as if he were something valuable and even fragile.

i. “No part of the body more precious, more tender, and more carefully guarded than the eye; and of the eye, no portion more peculiarly to be protected than the central apple, the pupil, or as the Hebrew calls it, ‘the daughter of the eye.’ The all wise Creator has placed the eye in a well protected position; it stands surrounded by projecting bones like Jerusalem encircled by mountains. Moreover, its great Author has surrounded it with many tunics of inward covering, besides the hedge of the eyebrows, the curtain of the eyelids, and the fence of the eyelashes; and, in addition to this, he has given to every man so high a value for his eyes, and so quick an apprehension of danger, that no member of the body is more faithfully cared for than the organ of sight.” (Spurgeon)

ii. This figure of speech is also used in Deu_32:10, Pro_7:2, and Zec_2:8. To be kept as the apple of the eye means:

- · To be kept with many guards and protections
- · To always be kept safe
- · To be kept from the small things, like dust and grit
- · To always be kept sensitive and tender
- · To be kept clear and unobstructed
- · To be kept as something beautiful and eminently useful

d. Hide me under the shadow of Your wings: This is another powerful figure of speech. The idea is of how a mother bird shields her young chicks from predators, from the elements, and from dangers by gathering them under her wings.

i. This figure of speech is also used in three other Psalms (Psa_36:7; Psa_57:1, and Psa_63:7). Jesus used this same word picture to show his love and desired care for Jerusalem in Mat_23:37.

ii. “Even as the parent bird completely shields her brood from evil, and meanwhile cherishes them with the warmth of her own heart, by covering them with her wings, so do thou with me, most condescending God, for I am thine offspring, and thou hast a parent’s love in perfection.” (Spurgeon)

iii. Taken together, these two phrases are powerful pictures of God’s care for His people. “He who has so fenced and guarded that precious and tender part, the pupil of the eye, and who has provided for the security of a young and helpless brood under the wings of their dam, is here entreated to extend the same providential care and parental love to the souls of his elect.” (Horne)

e. From the wicked who oppress me, from my deadly enemies who surround me: The threat in David’s life was real. He faced not only oppression that made his life difficult, but also deadly enemies who wanted to end his life.

i. In the midst of these real threats, David did the right thing: he prayed. “Fears that have become prayers are already more than half conquered.” (Maclaren)

ii. Boice quotes a Bible teacher who had the habit of praying a certain prayer when he felt he was under attack: “Lord, your property is in danger.”

3. (Psa_17:10-14) Defeat my proud and arrogant enemies.
They have closed up their fat hearts;
With their mouths they speak proudly.

They have now surrounded us in our steps;

They have set their eyes, crouching down to the earth, As a lion is eager to tear his prey,
And like a young lion lurking in secret places. Arise, O Lord,
Confront him, cast him down;

Deliver my life from the wicked with Your sword, With Your hand from men, O Lord,
From men of the world who have their portion in this life,

And whose belly You fill with Your hidden treasure.
They are satisfied with children,

And leave the rest of their possession for their babes.

a. They have closed up their fat hearts: David here begins to describe the deadly enemies who oppressed him so. They were insensitive (fat hearts), and spoke proudly.

i. “The meaning plainly is, that pride is the child of plenty, begotten by self-indulgence, which hardens the hearts of men against the fear of God, and the love of their neighbours... . Let every man take care, that, by pampering the flesh, he do not raise up an enemy of this stamp against himself.” (Horne)

b. Surrounded us in our steps ... set their eyes ... crouching down to the earth, as a lion: David described the dangerous, wild, beast-like actions of his enemies. They would destroy him as a lion destroys its prey.

c. Arise, O Lord, confront him, cast him down: David declared his dependence on God to protect him. It wasn't because David was afraid of such lion-like enemies; as a young boy David had bested both the bear and the lion (1Sa_17:33-37). It was because David needed to see his enemy defeated by the hand of God, not the hand of David.

i. Confront him: "Hebrew, prevent his face, i.e., go forth against him, and meet and face him in battle, as enemies use to do." (Poole)

ii. This Psalm has no firm connection to any particular recorded event in David's life, but it is not hard to see it belonging to the long period when Saul hunted David. During that time David refused to strike out against Saul when he had the opportunity, because he knew that God must strike against Saul, and not David himself.

d. Deliver my life from the wicked ... from men of the world who have their portion in this life: David recognized that one characteristic of his enemies was that they looked much more to this life than they did to eternity.

i. And, they may very well have some satisfactions in this life: whose belly You fill ... they are satisfied with children, and leave the rest of their possession for their babes. Spurgeon explained it like this: "Their sensual appetite gets the gain which it craved for. God gives to these swine the husks which they hunger for. A generous man does not deny dogs their bones; and our generous God gives even his

enemies enough to fill them, if they were not so unreasonable as never to be content.”

4. (Psa_17:15) The settled confidence of prayer. As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness;
I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.

a. As for me: David here set himself in contrast to his enemies, who looked only to this life and not to eternity.

i. “This superb verse soars straight up from the prosperous lowlands of verse 14, where all was earthbound.” (Kidner)

ii. “I do not envy this their felicity, but my hopes and happiness are of another nature. I do not place my portion in earthly and temporal treasures, as they do, but in beholding God’s face.” (Poole)

iii. “The smell of the furnace is upon the present psalm, but there is evidence in the last verse that he who wrote it came unharmed out of the flame.” (Spurgeon)

b. I will see Your face: David was confident not only of life after death, but that he would one day see the face of God. The idea is not merely of contact with God, but of unhindered fellowship with God.

c. See Your face in righteousness: The idea is that David would have a righteousness that would enable him to see the face of God; to have this unhindered relationship with Him.

i. From a New Covenant perspective, we can say that this righteousness is the gift of God, granted to those who receive the person and work of Jesus by faith.

d. I shall be satisfied when I awake: David knew that the transition from this life to the next was like waking. He knew that the world beyond was more real and less dreamlike than our own.

i. We tend to think of heaven and its realities as an uncertain, cloudy dream world. In truth it is more real than our present environment, which by contrast will seem uncertain and cloudy when we awake in God's presence.

ii. "The moment is at hand when we shall awake and start up and declare ourselves fools for having counted dreams as realities, whilst we were oblivious to the eternal realities." (Meyer)

iii. Though David's focus was on eternity, this verse does not ignore the present day. There is a real sense in which these realities – closer fellowship with God, His righteousness in our life, a life truly awake, a life more and more conformed to His image – can in greater and greater measure be ours in this life. We should remember that eternal life begins now.

e. When I awake in Your likeness: David did not have a sophisticated understanding of heaven; one might say that no one in the Old Testament really did. Yet he did know that when he saw God's face, when he received His righteousness, when he awoke in heaven's reality, that he would be in God's likeness.

i. David seemed to anticipate what Paul would write some 1,000 years later: For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom_8:29). The destiny of God's people is to be conformed

into the image of God, as perfectly displayed in Jesus Christ His Son.

ii. This – and perhaps only this – would make David satisfied. The implication is that he would never be satisfied until:

- · He saw God's face, enjoying unhindered relationship with Him.

- · He received God's righteousness.

- · He awoke to and lived in heaven's reality.

- · He was conformed into God's likeness.

iii. "The mind will be satisfied with his truth, the heart with his love, the will with his authority. We shall need nothing else." (Meyer)

(Psa 17:2) Make a just decision on my behalf!⁴
Decide what is right!⁵

(Psa 17:3) You have scrutinized my inner motives;⁶ you have examined me during the night.⁷
You have carefully evaluated me, but you find no sin.
I am determined I will say nothing sinful.⁸

(Psa 17:4) As for the actions of people⁹ —
just as you have commanded,
I have not followed in the footsteps of violent men.¹⁰

(Psa 17:5) I carefully obey your commands;¹¹
I do not deviate from them.¹²

(Psa 17:6) I call to you for you will answer me, O God.
Listen to me!¹³
Hear what I say!¹⁴

(Psa 17:7) Accomplish awesome, faithful deeds,¹⁵
you who powerfully deliver those who look to you for
protection from their enemies.¹⁶

(Psa 17:8) Protect me as you would protect the pupil of your
eye!¹⁷
Hide me in the shadow of your wings!¹⁸

(Psa 17:9) Protect me from¹⁹ the wicked men who attack²⁰
me, my enemies who crowd around me for the kill.²¹

(Psa 17:10) They are calloused;²² they speak arrogantly.²³

(Psa 17:11) They attack me, now they surround me;²⁴ they
intend to throw me to the ground.²⁵

(Psa 17:12) He²⁶ is like a lion²⁷ that wants to tear its prey
to bits,²⁸ like a young lion crouching²⁹ in hidden places.

(Psa 17:13) Rise up, LORD!
Confront him!³⁰ Knock him down!³¹
Use your sword to rescue me from the wicked man!³²

(Psa 17:14) LORD, use your power to deliver me from these
murderers,³³ from the murderers of this world!³⁴
They enjoy prosperity;³⁵
you overwhelm them with the riches they desire.³⁶
They have many children,
and leave their wealth to their offspring.³⁷

(Psa 17:15) As for me, because I am innocent I will see your
face;³⁸ when I awake you will reveal yourself to me.³⁹

(Psa 19:1) Psalm 191

For the music director; a psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God;² the sky displays his handiwork.³

(Guzik)

Psa 19:1-14

Psalms 19 – The Heavens, the Word, and the Glory of God

The title tells us both the author and the audience of the Psalm: To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. Some believe that the Chief Musician is the Lord God Himself, and others suppose him to be a leader of choirs or musicians in David's time, such as Heman the Singer or Asaph (1Ch_6:33; 1Ch_16:17; 1Ch_25:6).

“This Psalm reflects, more than any other, the beauty and splendor of the Hebrew poetry found in the Psalter. C.S. Lewis wrote, ‘I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world.’” (VanGemeren)

A. The message from the heavens.

1. (Psa_19:1-4 a) The message from the heavens is broad.
The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech nor language

Where their voice is not heard.

Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world.

a. The heavens declare the glory of God: David looked to the heavens – not the spiritual heaven where God is enthroned, but the heavens of the blue sky and the night sky – and he clearly saw the glory of God declared.

i. He could see it in the blue sky, with the glory of the sun and clouds and the beauty of sunrises and sunsets.

ii. He could see it in the night sky, with the brightness of the moon, the awe of the starry sky and the cloudy spread of the distant galaxies.

iii. These together – with their size, their awe, their grandeur – shouted to David and all who would see, “The God who created all this is glorious, and this is evidence of His glory.”

· · He is glorious in His size, having created something so big.

· · He is glorious in His engineering, having created something that works together so well.

· · He is glorious in His artistry, having created something so beautiful.

· · He is glorious in His goodness and kindness, having created something for all humanity to see.

b. And the firmament shows His handiwork: David repeats the idea in the previous line. “Firmament” is a poetic way of referring to the heavens or the sky, and they show the handiwork of God.

c. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge: The day sky and the night sky speak to us, and

reveal knowledge about the glory, wisdom, and creative greatness of God.

i. Utters speech: “This is stronger in the Hebrew text than it appears to be in English, for the image is literally of a gushing spring that copiously pours forth sweet, refreshing waters of revelation.” (Boice)

ii. Reveals knowledge: “Knowledge is well matched with night, since without the night skies man would have known, until recently, nothing but an empty universe.” (Kidner) If God had not placed the stars in the night sky, the blackness of night would have communicated powerfully to all humanity, ancient and modern, “There is nothing and no-one out there.”

iii. “Though all preachers on earth should grow silent, and every human mouth cease from publishing the glory of God, the heavens above will never cease to declare and proclaim his majesty and glory. They are for ever preaching; for, like an unbroken chain, their message is delivered from day to day and from night to night.” (Tholuck, cited in Spurgeon)

iv. “Day bids us labour, night reminds us to prepare for our last home; day bids us work for God, and night invites us to rest in him; day bids us look for endless day, and night warns us to escape from everlasting night.” (Spurgeon)

d. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard: The glory of God in the visible heavens is for all to see; it is communicated to all mankind, no matter what their language. It is a message that has gone out through all the earth.

i. The Apostle Paul expanded on this idea in Romans 1. He explained that God’s invisible attributes are clearly seen,

being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse (Rom_1:20). Paul told us that because this testimony had gone out through all creation, all men are without excuse for rejecting the God who gave us such clear (and beautiful) evidence of His power and wisdom.

ii. “Should a man live underground, and there converse with the works of art and mechanism, and should afterwards be brought up into the open day, and see the several glories of the heaven and earth, he would immediately pronounce them the works of such a Being as we define God to be.” (Aristotle, cited in Spurgeon)

iii. “For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.” (Robert Jastrow, cited in Boice)

2. (Psa_19:4-6) The message from the heavens is strong and glorious. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,
Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,

And rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven,
And its circuit to the other end;

And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

a. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun: David poetically described the nighttime sky as a dwelling place – a tent, a tabernacle – for the sun. The sun comes out of his “tent” every day to cross the heavens, and returns to his tabernacle at night.

i. "God has assigned it its place to occupy and its course to run; the whole sky its mere tent and track." (Kidner)

b. Like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race: The sun makes its course through the sky with strength and joy; like a man in his prime or an athlete running a race.

i. "All would agree that the psalm, if it glances at mythology, repudiates it. The sun may be 'like' a bridegroom or a runner; it is in fact no more than a glorious part of God's 'handiwork.'" (Kidner)

c. Its rising is from one end of heaven ... there is nothing hidden from its heat: The sun covers the whole sky, and its strength extends everywhere. It is a wonderful example of the glory of God declared in the heavens.

B. The message from the Word of God.

1. (Psa_19:7-9) The glorious character of God's word, described seven ways. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;

The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;

The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

a. The law of the Lord: Here David abruptly shifted from praising the God who reveals Himself in creation to praising the same God for revealing Himself in His word. It is as if David said, "Creation tells us much about God, but His word tells us much more."

i. “ ‘Two things’, according to Kant, ‘fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe ... the starry heavens above and the moral law within.’ The psalm transcends the second of these themes by looking to the divine law revealed.” (Kidner)

ii. One reason the word is a greater revelation than creation is that it tells us much more about God. It reveals Him as the covenant God of love, as reflected in the structure of this psalm. In Psa_19:1-6, God is referred to as El – the most generic word for God in the Hebrew language (even more generic than the commonly used Elohim). Yet here at Psa_119:7-9, God is referred to as Yahweh (the Lord), the God of covenant love and faithfulness to His people.

iii. “He is wisest who reads both the world-book and the Wordbook as two volumes of the same work, and feels concerning them, ‘My Father wrote them both.’” (Spurgeon)

iv. David then explains seven glorious statements about the word of God; how wonderful and effective it is. As is common in other places – especially the great Psalms 119 – David uses a variety of expressions to refer to the word of God (law, testimony, statutes, commandment, fear, judgments). It is best to see these as poetic terms describing God’s written revelation in general, rather than one specific type of revelation (such as only the laws given in the Mosaic law).

b. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: The word of God is perfect. It gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2Pe_1:3). While it does not give us all knowledge, all the knowledge it gives is true and perfect. Understood in its literary context, God’s word is never wrong in science or history or the understanding of either divine or human nature.

i. Part of the perfection of God's word is that it is effective; it does the work of converting the soul. There is power in the reading and hearing and studying of the word of God that goes beyond intellectual benefit; it actually changes for the better – converts – the soul.

ii. The Hebrew word translated here as converting is perhaps better understood as reviving; that is, bringing new life to the soul. "First, God's word 'revives.' Its restorative quality gives healing to the whole person by assuring forgiveness and cleansing and by giving life to the godly." (VanGemeren)

c. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: The word of God is sure, being reliable and certain. As the Psalmist would write at Psa_119:89, Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.

i. "Sure, by its passive form, can mean not only what is firm but what is confirmed: cf. 'verified' in Gen_42:20." (Kidner)

ii. Because it is so sure and certain, it does the work of making wise the simple. Many people of simple education or upbringing have tremendous wisdom unto life and godliness because they study and trust the sure word of the Lord.

d. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: God's word and the commands contained within are right. They are morally right, they are practically right, and they are universally right. They are right because it is the revelation of a God who is holy, true, and always right.

i. Are right: "To make straight, smooth, right, upright, opposed to crookedness in mind or conduct; showing what the man should be, both within and without." (Clarke)

ii. The one who knows the word of God and the God of the word rejoices in this. They find joy; actual pleasure in the truth of God and relationship with God revealed in His word.

e. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: Because God's word comes from a God who is Himself pure and holy, it itself is pure. A pure God can communicate no other way. We never have to worry about the word of God leading people into sin or impurity; if it seems to have happened, it is evidence that the scriptures have been twisted (2Pe_3:16).

i. This pure word will enlighten the eyes. It will bring the cheer and comfort and knowledge and confidence that a light in the midst of darkness brings.

f. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: The word of God is clean, and therefore is enduring forever. It will never fade or corrode, diminishing because of impurity. It is clean and it makes clean.

i. Here David called the word of God the "fear of the Lord." It is deeply connected to the awe and majesty of God Himself. One who reads and hears and studies the word of God, meeting Him in His word, will have an appropriate appreciation of God's awe and majesty – the fear of the Lord.

g. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether: David summarized this beautiful chain of seven pearls, each describing some aspect of the word of God. Here he declared that the words of God are true and righteous altogether; there is nothing false or unrighteous in His word.

i. There is no applied aspect to this statement as in the previous six. For David, it was enough to simply say it: “true and righteous altogether.” Perhaps David assumed we would be wise and logical enough to apply it ourselves: “Therefore read it, study it, meditate on it, love it, live it.”

ii. Remember that King David wrote this with only a fraction of what we have today as the word of God; and by most accounts his portion was not as glorious as the complete revelation of God. David would have the first five books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); Joshua, Judges, a few Psalms, and perhaps Job and Ruth. We can only imagine what King David would write about Isaiah or Hosea or the entire Psalter; much less any of the books of the New Testament. We can say with confidence that God’s word is far more glorious than King David knew!

2. (Psa_19:10-11) The great value of God’s word. More to be desired are they than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward.

a. More to be desired are they than gold: King David insisted that the value of God’s word – His written revelation to man – was more valuable and desirable than gold itself. David wanted no amount of money or wealth to command his attention and affection more than the word of God.

i. King David was a massively wealthy man, yet he is rarely known for his riches. He is much more known for his great heart towards God. His son Solomon was even more wealthy than David, and was known for his riches – yet not nearly as much for his heart towards God and his love of God’s word.

ii. If it wasn't enough to say that God's word should be more desirable than gold, King David amplified the point by saying, "Yea, than much fine gold."

iii. "This is strictly true; but who believes it? By most men gold is preferred both to God and his judgments; and they will barter every heavenly portion for gold and silver!" (Clarke)

b. Sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb: For King David, God's word was not only to be held in greater esteem than material wealth, but also greater than sensual experiences. Honey is sweet and pleasant to eat, but God's word is sweeter still.

c. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward: David here gave two reasons why the word of God was greater than material wealth or sensual pleasures.

i. God's word gives instruction – warning – that wealth or pleasures do not give (is warned).

- · Warning is needed for sins we are susceptible to.
- · Warning is needed for dangers we cannot see.
- · Warning is needed for dangers we cannot appreciate.
- · Warning is needed for dangers far off in the future.
- · Warnings are often rejected.

ii. God's word gives benefit – reward – greater than wealth or pleasures (great reward).

d. In keeping them there is great reward: It is also true that there is great reward for keeping the Word of God; but that is not what the Psalmist said here. Here David noted the reward in keeping them. There is a sense in which obedience becomes its own reward, because we live the way God wants us to and designed us to live.

i. One of the great rewards of keeping the word of God is peace of mind. "A quiet conscience is a little heaven. A martyr was fastened to the stake, and the sheriff who was to execute him expressed his sorrow that he should persevere in his opinions, and compel him to set fire to the pile. The martyr answered, 'Do not trouble yourself, for I am not troubling myself. Come and lay your hand upon my heart, and see if it does not beat quietly.' His request was complied with, and he was found to be quite: calm. 'Now,' said he, 'lay your hand on your own heart, and see if you are not more troubled than I am; and then go your way, and, instead of pitying me, pity yourself.'" (Spurgeon)

3. (Psa_19:12-13) The desire for inward cleansing. Who can understand his errors?
Cleanse me from secret faults.

Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins;

Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless,
And I shall be innocent of great transgression.

a. Who can understand his errors? In the previous verse David reflected on the warnings found in the word of God, and in the great reward found in obeying God's word. This made him reflect on the times

and ways he had ignored the warnings and not kept the word.

i. In asking, “Who can understand his errors?” David understood that he had ignored and disobeyed God’s word even more than he was aware of. What he knew was enough to make him concerned; his actual errors before God were still worse.

ii. Notably, the fact that we cannot understand our errors does not excuse us from them. We are still accountable for such errors and faults before God, and must trust in His atonement to cleanse us from these errors and secret faults.

b. Cleanse me from secret faults: Knowing that he could not know just how many his errors were before God, King David wisely prayed this prayer. He needed cleansing even from the sins and faults that were secret to him.

i. “We desire the inner purity of heart. But this is peculiarly God’s prerogative. It is his work to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit. ‘Cleanse thou me.’” (Meyer)

ii. Secret faults: “From those which I have committed, and have forgotten; from those for which I have not repented; from those which have been committed in my heart, but have not been brought to act in my life; from those which I have committed without knowing that they were sins, sins of ignorance; and from those which I have committed in private, for which I should blush and be confounded were they to be made public.” (Clarke)

c. Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins: David added this because he knew that his problem was greater than secret faults and unknown errors. Without

God's help (which he here prayed for) he was also perfectly capable of committing presumptuous sins; sins done in a proud and knowing way.

i. Things that make sin presumptuous.

- · When we know better.
- · When friends have warned us.
- · When God Himself has warned us.
- · When we have warned others against the same sins.
- · When we plan and relish our sin.

ii. "The Rabbins here observe how the prophet riseth in his request, first for pardon of lesser sins, and then for power against greater; like a beggar, say they, first craves a little water, and then a morsel of bread. We should do so." (Trapp)

iii. The description of errors and secret faults and presumptuous sins reminds us that sin has a progression.

- · It goes from passing temptation to chosen thought (errors).
- · It goes from chosen thought to object of meditation.
- · It goes from object of meditation to wished-for fulfillment.
- · It goes from wished-for fulfillment to planned action (secret faults).
- · It goes from planned action to opportunity sought.

- · It goes from opportunity sought to performed act.
- · It goes from action to repeated action.
- · It goes from repeated action to delight (presumptuous sins).
- · It goes from delight to new and various ways.
- · It goes from new and various ways to habit.
- · It goes from habit to idolatry, demanding to be served.
- · It goes from idolatry to sacrifice.
- · It goes from sacrifice to slavery.

iv. We can say that all along this continuum the Holy Spirit – and hopefully our conscience – say, “No – stop!” All along this continuum we are given the way of escape by God (1Co_10:13), if we will only take it. Yet if we do not, and end up in slavery to sin, it legitimately questions the state of our soul (1Jn_3:6-9).

v. Because of this great danger, David prayed “Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins.” “Will you just note, that this prayer was the prayer of a saint, the prayer of a holy man of God? Did David need to pray thus? Did the ‘man after God’s own heart’ need to cry, ‘Keep back thy servant?’ Yes, he did.” (Spurgeon)

d. Let them not have dominion over me: Indeed, King David not only knew that he was capable of such sins, but that they could potentially have dominion over him. His prayer was rightly placed; his love of God’s word and his dependence upon God in prayer would help him stay free from the dominion of enslaving sin.

i. This prayer is even more fitting for one who relates to God on the basis of the New Covenant. As

Paul wrote, For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law, but under grace (Rom_6:14).

e. Then I shall be blameless: David knew that if sin was addressed in his life – dealing both with inward, secret sin and outward, presumptuous, enslaving sin – then he could be blameless and innocent of great transgression.

i. This was not a claim of sinless perfection, either achieved or to attain to before resurrection. David knew well that he needed to be cleansed, and trusted in God's perfect sacrifice – prefigured by the animal sacrifices he practiced in the Mosaic system. David understood blamelessness and innocence on a human, relative level and not in an absolute sense according to the Divine measure.

4. (Psa_19:14) A prayer of surrender and purity.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart

Be acceptable in Your sight,

O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

a. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight: David closed this glorious Psalm with a humble surrender of his mouth and heart to God. He knew that real godliness was not only a matter of what a man did, but also of what he said and thought in his heart.

i. This was not a proud proclamation that knew he was innocent and blameless; it was a plea to be made so by the

transforming power of God.

ii. Acceptable in Your sight: “The psalm ends, not on the note of avoiding sin, but on that of offering back to God the mind’s fitting response to His own words, as a pure sacrifice (cf. Hos_14:2). This is the probable implication of acceptable, a term often found in sacrificial contexts.” (Kidner)

b. O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer: King David looked to the Lord God to be his strength and redemption. He knew that he needed a Redeemer, and that the faithful God would rescue him.

i. Strength can also be translated as Rock. God’s strength is like a mighty rock that rescues us and gives us a firm standing place.

ii. Redeemer is that great Hebrew word goel, the kinsman-redeemer. It was the goel who bought his relative out of slavery; who rescued him in bankruptcy and total loss. King David looked to God Himself as his kinsman-redeemer.

iii. “If our Rock were not our Redeemer, we should be without hope. If our Redeemer were not our Rock, still might we be afraid. It is good that we never forget the mutual interpretation of these two revelations of God.” (Morgan)

iv. This Psalm has run a glorious course. It begins with recognizing the glory of God in creation, then the glory of His written revelation. Next to this great God and His great works, David knew himself to be small and sinful. Yet this great God would also be David’s strength and Redeemer as David put his trust in Him.

v. The glorious God of creation and revelation was also the glorious God of personal relationship and redemption for His people. King David knew this; so should we.

(Psa 19:2) Day after day it speaks out;⁴
night after night it reveals his greatness.⁵

(Psa 19:3) There is no actual speech or word, nor is its⁶
voice literally heard.

(Psa 19:4) Yet its voice⁷ echoes⁸ throughout the earth;
its⁹ words carry¹⁰ to the distant horizon.¹¹
In the sky¹² he has pitched a tent for the sun.¹³

(Psa 19:5) Like a bridegroom it emerges¹⁴ from its
chamber;¹⁵ like a strong man it enjoys¹⁶ running its
course.¹⁷

(Psa 19:6) It emerges from the distant horizon,¹⁸
and goes from one end of the sky to the other;¹⁹ nothing
can escape²⁰ its heat.

(Psa 19:7) The law of the LORD is perfect and preserves
one's life.²¹

The rules set down by the LORD²² are reliable²³ and impart
wisdom to the inexperienced.²⁴

(Psa 19:8) The LORD's precepts are fair²⁵ and make one
joyful.²⁶

The LORD's commands²⁷ are pure²⁸ and give insight for
life.²⁹

(Psa 19:9) The commands to fear the LORD are right³⁰ and
endure forever.³¹

The judgments given by the LORD are trustworthy
and absolutely just.³²

(Psa 19:10) They are of greater value³³ than gold, than even a great amount of pure gold;
they bring greater delight³⁴ than honey,
than even the sweetest honey from a honeycomb.

(Psa 19:11) Yes, your servant finds moral guidance there;³⁵
those who obey them receive a rich reward.³⁶

(Psa 19:12) Who can know all his errors?³⁷
Please do not punish me for sins I am unaware of.³⁸

(Psa 19:13) Moreover, keep me from committing flagrant³⁹
sins;
do not allow such sins to control me.⁴⁰
Then I will be blameless,
and innocent of blatant⁴¹ rebellion.

(Psa 19:14) May my words and my thoughts be acceptable
in your sight,⁴²

O LORD, my sheltering rock⁴³ and my redeemer.⁴⁴

(Psa 20:1) Psalm 201

For the music director; a psalm of David.

May the LORD answer² you³ when you are in trouble;⁴ may
the God of Jacob⁵ make you secure!

(Guzik)

Psa 20:1-9

Psalms 20 – The Lord Saves His Anointed

The title of this Psalm is the same as several others: To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. Yet the Psalm itself is different, notably because it is in the voice of a multitude that prays on behalf of the King of Israel as he is ready to go

into battle. This is seen in the way the Psalm speaks in the first-person plural (We) in Psa_20:1-5; Psa_20:7-9. The first-person singular (I) of 20:6 is likely the response of either David himself or the High Priest on his behalf.

Yet since this is A Psalm of David, perhaps David took a moment of spontaneous prayer by the people on his behalf and shaped it into a song to remember and recall and spiritual strength and glory of that moment.

A. The people pray for the King.

1. (Psa_20:1-2) May the Lord answer and help. May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble; May the name of the God of Jacob defend you; May He send you help from the sanctuary,
And strengthen you out of Zion;

a. May the Lord answer you: This was a prayer from a multitude or congregation (based on the use of we in 20:5) that God would answer the prayers of one, who in context is the king readying for battle.

i. We know that “you” refers to one person, because it is in the singular. “You is singular throughout, identified in verse 6 as the Lord’s anointed.” (Kidner)

ii. The picture is that of King David, before battle – perhaps something like the battle with the Syrians in 2 Samuel 10 – at the tabernacle of God and offering prayers and sacrifices before the battle. Here the on looking multitude responds to the king’s prayer with the cry, “May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble.”

iii. “It is one of the most stirring of the Psalms, by its tense awareness of life-and-death issues soon to be resolved.”

(Kidner)

iv. With the eye of faith, we see that this also speaks to the great battle fought by one greater than King David – by Jesus, the Son of David and the King of Kings. We can see this prayer being offered prophetically for Jesus as He pointed Himself toward the cross, where He would fight the greatest battle against sin, death, and Satan’s power.

b. Answer you in the day of trouble ... defend you ... send you help ... strengthen you: After the pattern of Hebrew poetry, this idea is intensively expressed by the use of repetition with slight variation. David was about to lead Israel into battle and he needed the help of God in each of these ways.

i. Because King David was about to lead Israel as a whole into battle, the language is full of references appealing to the Lord as the God of Israel.

- · The Lord: Using Yahweh, the covenant name of God.

- · The God of Jacob: Remembering Israel’s patriarch.

- · From the sanctuary: Calling to mind the tabernacle, the center of Israel’s worship.

- · Out of Zion: Referring to the hills of Jerusalem.

ii. “This word for sanctuary is simply ‘holiness’, a synonym here for Zion, where already God’s ark, but not yet His Temple, signified His presence.” (Kidner)

iii. The prayer that God would strengthen you out of Zion is fitting for more than the field of battle. It is also appropriate for the church pulpit, which is a field of battle in a spiritual sense. “This verse is a benediction befitting a Sabbath

morning, and may be the salutation either of a pastor to his people, or of a church to its minister.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_20:3) May the Lord receive sacrifice. May He remember all your offerings,
And accept your burnt sacrifice.

Selah

a. May He remember all your offerings: Sacrifice was commonly made at important moments, such as on the eve of battle. This is a prayer that the Lord would see and receive the sacrifices King David would make before war.

i. All your offerings: “The minchah, which is here mentioned, was a gratitude-offering. It is rarely used to signify a bloody sacrifice.” (Clarke)

b. May He remember ... and accept your burnt sacrifice: This understands that not all sacrifices are accepted before God. If they were not offered with faith and in accordance with the Levitical system, they would not be remembered or accepted by God.

i. Burnt sacrifice: “The olah here mentioned was a bloody sacrifice. The blood of the victim was spilt at the altar, and the flesh consumed.” (Clarke)

ii. The place of faith was important in the Old Testament sacrificial system. The one who brought the offering had to trust in the ultimate, perfect sacrifice that God would one day provide, the one that each animal sacrifice pointed towards (Gen_22:8; Gen_22:14).

iii. “The prayer for acceptance of the burnt offering is very graphic, since the word rendered ‘accept’ is literally ‘esteem fat.’” (Maclaren)

c. Selah: The idea in the Hebrew for this word (occurring 74 times in the Old Testament) is for a pause. Most people think it speaks of a reflective pause, a pause to meditate on the words just spoken. It may also be a musical instruction, for a musical interlude of some kind.

i. We take this Selah as an opportunity to consider Jesus, and see that this prayer was appropriate for Him as He faced the cross. The prayer was worthy to be prayed – that God would indeed remember and accept the offering Jesus made on the cross, which could rightly be called a burnt sacrifice, as it was burned with the fire of God’s righteous judgment, and how Jesus held nothing back in this sacrifice.

3. (Psa_20:4) May the Lord grant fulfillment.

May He grant you according to your heart’s desire,

And fulfill all your purpose.

a. May He grant you according to your heart’s desire: In this moment, King David had one desire – to defend the people of God and the kingdom in covenant with God. Therefore it was good to pray, “May He grant you according to your heart’s desire.”

i. When our desires are in accord with the plan and will of God for us, we can pray this same prayer with confidence. We can also look for God to bring our desires more and more into conformity with His, in the course of Christian growth.

b. And fulfill all your purpose: Since David’s purpose was victory for the people of God, this was a good and necessary prayer to pray.

i. We see this statement also applied to the great desire and purpose for the King of Kings as He went to battle to accomplish our salvation. With the perception of faith, we look to Jesus, struggling in the Garden of Gethsemane and

say to Him, “May He grant You according to Your heart’s desire, and fulfill all Your purpose.”

ii. On a personal level, we also see that God gives each one a purpose to fulfill in His great plan of the ages. The key to a life of fulfilled desire and achieved purpose is to find our place in His great plan, instead of hoping to make God an actor in our plan.

· · Jesus knew this fulfilled desire and purpose, shown by His prayer in John 17 : I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. (Joh_17:4)

· · The Apostle Paul knew this fulfilled desire and purpose, shown by these words toward the end of his earthly life: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (2Ti_4:7)

4. (Psa_20:5) May the Lord answer prayer. We will rejoice in your salvation,

And in the name of our God we will set up our banners! May the Lord fulfill all your petitions.

a. We will rejoice in your salvation: This was the confidence the people had in King David’s success. They had so much trust in God’s deliverance that they had already set up our banners of joyful celebration.

i. “Here the raising of the banners signifies God’s victory over the enemies.” (VanGemeren)

ii. The banners are “Our flags of defiance to the enemy, or our tokens of triumph to God’s glory, who hath given us the victory.” (Trapp)

b. May the Lord fulfill all your petitions: Once again is both the prayer and the confidence that God would hear and

fulfill the prayers of His king.

i. This was true both of David and the Son of David; of the King of Israel and the King of Kings. Jesus prayed for success in His work on the cross, and it was unthinkable that the Father would not answer the prayers of the Son.

B. The triumph of the Lord's Anointed.

1. (Psa_20:6) The Lord saves His anointed. Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand.

a. Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed: Here King David expressed the great confidence that God would answer the prayers of His people. God would save (rescue) the king (His anointed).

i. His anointed: In a sense, every king of Israel was God's anointed because they were all appointed to their office by a literal anointing of oil poured upon their head. This literal anointing with oil was a picture of the spiritual anointing with the Holy Spirit needed for their duty of leading the people of God as king. In saying "His anointed," David refers to himself as king.

ii. His anointed: At the same time, it was also understood that there would come an ultimate Anointed One, the perfect King of Israel – the Meshiach, the Christ, the Messiah (as in Psalms 2 and others). It was true of David and Israel in his day that the Lord saves His anointed and his people; it is even more perfectly true of the ultimate and perfect Anointed One, Jesus Christ.

iii. "The verb 'saves', from the same root as 'victorious' could yield the translation 'the Lord gives victory to his anointed.'" (VanGemeren) Kidner also notes that this word (in Psa_20:6

and Psa_20:9) comes from the same root in Hebrew as the name of Jesus.

iv. Indeed, the Lord saves His anointed:

- · The Father saved the Son from sin.
- · The Father saved the Son from pride.
- · The Father saved the Son from self-reliance.
- · The Father saved the Son from doubt.
- · The Father saved the Son from failure.
- · The Father saved the Son from death.

b. He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand: This confirms and strengthens the idea that the Lord saves His anointed.

i. He is saved by an answer; God is not silent to His anointed.

ii. He is saved from heaven; God hears and sends help from His throne. iii. He is saved with power, with the saving strength.

iv. He is saved with skill and favor, with the strength that comes from His right hand.

v. Each of these was true for King David, but even more perfectly true of the Son of David, the ultimate anointed of the Lord.

2. (Psa_20:7) Trusting in the name of the Lord. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;

But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

a. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: David knew what kings and their people usually trusted in
– human strength and the ways it is often expressed (in chariots and in horses).

i. If writing today, David might say something like, “Some trust in nuclear weapons and some trust in tanks.” It is part of human nature to put our trust in such things.

ii. “Chariots and horses are very terrible, especially to raw soldiers unaccustomed to their whirling onset; but the Name is mightier.” (Maclaren)

iii. Part of the reason David refused to trust in chariots and horses was because God had commanded it so, commanding in the Law of Moses that the Kings of Israel would not multiply horses for themselves, either for use in cavalry or to pull war-chariots (Deu_17:16).

b. But we will remember: David drew a strong contrast. “They trust in those things, but our trust is in God.”

i. “In the spiritual war, in which we are all engaged, the first and necessary step to victory is, to renounce all confidence in the wisdom and strength of nature and the world; and to remember, that we can do nothing, but in the name, by the merits, through the power, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and our God.” (Horne)

ii. “Alas, how many in our day who profess to be the Lord’s are as abjectly dependent upon their fellow-men or upon an arm of flesh in some shape or other, as if they had never known the name of Jehovah at all.” (Spurgeon)

c. But we will remember the name of the Lord our God: David put his trust in the person, the character of God. He didn't carry the name of the Lord as a magical incantation; rather the name speaks of the comprehensive character of God and is an expression of His faithfulness to His covenant with Israel.

i. "By the name of God is generally understood, in Holy Writ, the various properties and attributes of God: these properties and attributes make up and constitute the name of God. As when Solomon says, 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe.'" (Melvill, cited in Spurgeon)

ii. This – the character and faithfulness of God – was stronger to David and Israel than thousands of chariots or horses.

iii. Therefore, we sense a triumphant defiance in David when he says, "But we will remember." He acknowledges how easy it is to forget, and how counter-intuitive to human nature it is to trust

God instead of human strength and resources.

3. (Psa_20:8-9) The triumph of those who trust in the Lord. They have bowed down and fallen;
But we have risen and stand upright. Save, Lord!
May the King answer us when we call.

a. They have bowed down and fallen; but we have risen and stand upright: David's trust in God could be justified on many grounds, but one of those was simply pragmatic grounds – trusting in God works, and David saw it. Those who trusted in chariots and horses have bowed down and fallen. Those who remembered the name of the Lord have risen and stand upright.

b. Save, Lord! May the King answer us when we call: The rescue David confidently sang of had not completely come. He still needed to cry out, "Save, Lord!" He still had his trust in the anticipated answer of the Lord.

i. "This is the language of faith, not after the battle, but before it." (Morgan)

ii. "The final phrase, lit. 'in the day of our calling', has a telling echo of the opening verse." (Kidner)

(Psa 20:2) May he send you help from his temple;⁶ from Zion may he give you support!

(Psa 20:3) May he take notice⁷ of your offerings; may he accept⁸ your burnt sacrifice! (Selah)

(Psa 20:4) May he grant your heart's desire;⁹ may he bring all your plans to pass!¹⁰

(Psa 20:5) Then we will shout for joy over your¹¹ victory; we will rejoice¹² in the name of our God! May the LORD grant all your requests!

(Psa 20:6) Now I am sure¹³ that the LORD will deliver¹⁴ his chosen king;¹⁵ he will intervene for him¹⁶ from his holy heavenly temple,¹⁷ and display his mighty ability to deliver.¹⁸

(Psa 20:7) Some trust in chariots and others in horses,¹⁹ but we²⁰ depend on²¹ the LORD our God.

(Psa 20:8) They will fall down,²² but we²³ will stand firm.²⁴

(Psa 20:9) The LORD will deliver the king;²⁵ he will answer us²⁶ when we call to him for help!²⁷

(Psa 21:1) Psalm 211

For the music director; a psalm of David.

O LORD, the king rejoices in the strength you give;² he takes great delight in the deliverance you provide.³

(Guzik)

Psa 21:1-13

Psalms 21 – The Joyful King

The title of this Psalm is the same as several others: To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. It logically connects with the previous Psalm (20). It would seem that the victory prayed for and trusted in has been realized, and now David thanked God for the victory given.

“There the people prayed for the king; here they give thanks for him: there they asked that his desires might be fulfilled : here they bless Jehovah, who has fulfilled them : there the battle was impending; here it has been won, though foes are still in the field.” (Maclaren)

A. A grateful, joyful king.

1. (Psa_21:1-2) The king's joy in God's strength. The king shall have joy in Your strength, O Lord; And in Your salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! You have given him his heart's desire,
And have not withheld the request of his lips.

Selah

a. The king shall have joy in Your strength, O Lord: King David had many reasons to take joy in the strength of God. Perhaps this joy came from preservation and success in battle or some other deliverance.

i. The tone of the opening of this Psalm is passionate. “The shoutings of the early Methodists in the excitement of the joy were far more pardonable than our own lukewarmness. Our joy should have some sort of inexpressibleness in it.” (Spurgeon)

b. You have given him his heart’s desire: The strength and salvation of God came to David in response to both the desire of his heart and his spoken prayers (the request of his lips).

i. This speaks to the special place answered prayer has in the life of the believer. Every Christian should know the thrill of frequent, wonderful answers to prayer. When a Christian does not enjoy the blessing of answered prayer it is because they are prayerless, praying wrongly, or because of some hindrance in prayer.

ii. There are many things that can hinder prayer in the life of the believer; things which should prevent one from saying with David, “You have given him his heart’s desire, and have not withheld the request of his lips.” Unanswered prayer should be regarded as a warning signal that there may be a problem in one or more of the following reasons for unanswered prayer.

- · Not abiding in Jesus (Joh_15:7)

- · Unbelief (Mat_17:20-21)

- · Failure to Fast (Mat_17:21)
- · A Bad Marriage Relationship (1Pe_3:7)
- · Not Asking (Jam_4:2)
- · Selfish Praying (Jam_4:3)
- · Disobedience (1Jn_3:22)
- · Not Praying in God's Will (1Jn_5:14-15)
- · Unconfessed Sin (Jam_5:16)
- · Cold, Passionless Prayer (Jam_5:16-18; 2Ki_20:5)
- · Prayerlessness and Lack of Persistence in Prayer (Luk_18:1-7; Psa_55:17)
- · Sin Against Others (Mat_5:23-24)
- · Lack of Unity (Mat_18:19)
- · Not Praying in the Name of Jesus (Joh_14:13-14)
- · Pride (Jam_4:6, 1Pe_5:5, Pro_3:34)
- · Lying and Deceitfulness (Psa_17:1)
- · Lack of Bible Reading and Bible Teaching (Pro_28:9)
- · Trusting in the Length or Form of Prayer (Mat_6:7)

iii. Our prayers are not answered as if the avoidance of these things earns or merits God's response, or if He is in debt to

us if we do not do them. Yet they are clearly hindrances to answered prayer.

c. Selah: The idea in the Hebrew for this word (occurring 74 times in the Old Testament) is for a pause. Most people think it speaks of a reflective pause, a pause to meditate on the words just spoken. It may also be a musical instruction, for a musical interlude of some kind.

i. We take this Selah as an opportunity to thank God for the strength and salvation He has shown in our life, and for the glorious way He answers prayer. We, like King David of old, take joy in such a great and loving God.

2. (Psa_21:3-7) Reasons for the king's joy.

For You meet him with the blessings of goodness; You set a crown of pure gold upon his head.
He asked life from You, and You gave it to him— Length of days forever and ever.
His glory is great in Your salvation;

Honor and majesty You have placed upon him. For You have made him most blessed forever;
You have made him exceedingly glad with Your presence.

For the king trusts in the Lord,

And through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved.

a. You meet him with the blessings of goodness: King David could see that the goodness of God had come to meet him. God brought it to him, more than David chasing down these blessings of goodness.

i. It was certainly true that God went before David with blessings and that David recognized and praised Him for it. Yet often did not seem like that in the many long years between his anointing for the throne as a young man and when he finally took the throne of Israel.

ii. God's goodness and grace comes to meet us all the time.

- · The grace of His love loves us before we ever loved Him.

- · The grace of restraint keeps us back from committing sins that would put us even more out of reach of the Gospel.

- · The grace of salvation comes out to meet us, bringing us the goodness of God and making able to receive the Gospel.

- · The grace of ministry prepares us a thousand ways for what God has for us in the future.

- · The grace of service prepares the ground where we work before we ever get there.

b. You set a crown of pure gold upon his head: David wore the crown both of the throne of Israel – God's special nation – and the crown of victory. Its nature of pure gold shows how special the nation and the victory was.

i. Of King David it was undeniably true that he let God put the crown on his head. Though in some sense he had the right and the reasons to forcibly take the crown from Saul, he waited for God to place it upon his head.

c. He asked life from You, and You gave it to him: David went into battle praying that God would preserve his life, and now he celebrated the answer to that prayer. In the life-and-

death danger of battle, David was given life and length of days.

i. “While the gift of life ... for ever and ever might have implied to an Old Testament reader either a hyperbole ... or an allusion to the endless dynasty promised to David in 2Sa_7:16, the New Testament has filled in the picture firmly with the figure of the ultimate king, the Messiah, for whom the whole stanza is true without exaggeration.” (Kidner)

ii. “The ancient Jewish Targum (the Chaldean paraphrase of the Old Testament) and Talmud render the word king in verse 1 by *melek mashiach* (King Messiah), which means that the Jews in an early period understood these words to be spoken of the Messiah. A change came in the Middle Ages as a result of a judgment by Rabbi Solomon Isaaci, known as Rashi (b. a.d. 1040). He endorsed the early view but suggested it be dropped, saying, ‘Our old doctors interpreted this psalm of King Messiah, but in order to meet the Schismatics [that is, the Christians] it is better to understand it of David himself.’” (Boice)

d. His glory is great in Your salvation: David knew that exaltation that came to kings and victors in battle; but here he declared that this glory, this honor, this majesty he enjoyed came from God and not from himself.

e. You have made him exceedingly glad with Your presence: David proclaimed that he was most blessed forever, but it was the presence of God Himself that was his greatest blessing and gladness. David was more thrilled with the presence of God than with the crown of royalty or victory.

f. The king trusts in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved: David declared his trust in

the mercy of God, and that it would continue to preserve and bless him in the future.

i. Each of these things was certainly true of King David, but they are also – or perhaps even more so – true of David's greater Son, the Messiah, Jesus Christ the Son of David. We can apply each line in Psa_21:3-7 to Jesus, victorious after His great work on the cross.

- · Victorious Jesus was met with the blessings of goodness when He ascended to heaven.

- · Jesus wears the crown, both as King of Kings and glorious conqueror – and His crown is of pure gold.

- · Jesus asked life from God the Father, and as God's Holy One was delivered from death.

- · Jesus gloried in the salvation extended to Him from the Father; not a salvation from sin, but a victory over sin and death.

- · Jesus rejoiced in the presence of His Father, even though there was a sense in which it was turned away from Him on the cross.

- · Jesus continues to trust in His Father, and will not be moved.

ii. "Napoleon crowned himself, but Jehovah crowned the Lord Jesus; the empire of the one melted in an hour, but the other has an abiding dominion." (Spurgeon)

iii. We think particularly of what Psa_21:6 tells us of Jesus: For You have made him most blessed forever; You have made him exceedingly glad with Your presence. It tells that even though Jesus was a man of sorrows and well acquainted with

grief (Isa_53:3), at the same time He was a man who knew what it was to be most blessed forever and exceedingly glad.

iv. "He was the Prince of Peace, even when he was despised and rejected of men. Deep as were his griefs, we may reckon Jesus of Nazareth among the happiest of men." (Spurgeon)

v. We can think of many reasons why Jesus is so happy.

- · He never sinned, and sin is the mother of sorrow.

- · He never was pained by His conscience.

- · He never endured in Himself hatred, envy, bitterness or unforgiveness.

- · He had perfect peace in the wisdom and power of God the Father.

- · He was a giving, generous man and knew the joy of giving.

- · He completely finished His work and knows the satisfaction of that.

- · He is the source of all blessing, and knows the joy of blessing others.

- · He rejoices over every sinner that comes to repentance.

- · He rejoices in seeing His people at work for Him.

- · He rejoices in the sufferings they endure for Him. B. The judgments of God defend His people.

1. (Psa_21:8-10) What God will do to His enemies

Your hand will find all Your enemies;

Your right hand will find those who hate You.

You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger; The Lord shall swallow them up in His wrath, And the fire shall devour them.

Their offspring You shall destroy from the earth, And their descendants from among the sons of men.

a. Your hand will find all Your enemies: David recognized that even though he was victorious in battle, God was done finding and judging His enemies.

i. The time of Your anger: “The expression, ‘the time of thine anger,’ reminds us that as now is the time of his grace, so there will be a set time for his wrath. The judge goes upon assize at an appointed time. There is a day of vengeance of our God; let those who despise the day of grace remember this day of wrath.” (Spurgeon)

b. The Lord shall swallow them up in His wrath: David confidently expressed his confidence that God would judge His enemies, and he expressed that confidence in the strongest terms – even that God would also judge the posterity of those who fight against Him.

i. “We pity the lost for they are men, but we cannot pity them as enemies of Christ.” (Spurgeon)

ii. The fire shall devour them: “Those that might have had Christ to rule and save them, but rejected him, and fought against him, even the remembrance of that will be enough to make them to eternity a fiery oven to themselves.” (Henry, cited in Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_21:11-12) Why the enemies of God deserve judgment

For they intended evil against You;

They devised a plot which they are not able to perform.

Therefore You will make them turn their back;

You will make ready Your arrows on Your string toward their faces.

a. For they intended evil against You: The strong statements of judgment in Psa_21:8-10 seem to demand an explanation. Why such a severe judgment? Because they intentionally rebelled against God and His people, even though their plans were bigger than their ability to perform (they devised a plot which they are not able to perform).

i. "Intentional evil has a virus in it which is not found in sins of ignorance; now as ungodly men with malice aforethought attack the gospel of Christ, their crime is great, and their punishment will be proportionate." (Spurgeon)

ii. We find comfort in the truth, they devised a plot which they are not able to perform. Many threaten and confidently announce the demise of God's work in our day, but they most definitely not able to perform it.

b. You will make them turn their back: David sees – and perhaps literally saw – the enemies of God running away on the field of battle, with their back turned against the advancing armies of God.

c. You will make ready Your arrows on Your string toward their faces: David saw the enemies of God as helpless before the ready arrows and taught bow string of the war-like, judging God. His arrows are aimed right at their faces.

i. “The judgments of God are called his ‘arrows,’ being sharp, swift, sure, and deadly.” (Horne)

ii. This reminds us how near the judgment of God actually is against those who reject Him, and how it is only His great mercy that prevents the release of His arrow of judgment against them. It is a great (but rarely regarded or understood) sin that man ignores and presumes upon this great mercy.

3. (Psa_21:13) Praising the God of strength. Be exalted, O Lord, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power.

a. Be exalted, O Lord, in Your own strength! David worshipped God directly here. He exalted the Lord who had this great strength within Himself, and never needs to rely on an other for strength. i. “Exalt thyself, O Lord – thy creatures cannot exalt thee.” (Clarke)

b. We will sing and praise Your power: After the direct statement of praise, David expressed the determination that he and the people of God would continue to praise God, and to do so in song.

i. The Psalm’s end is consistent with the tone throughout. It is full of praise to God for the blessings of victory, deliverance, and answered prayer. This attitude should always be among the people of God.

(Psa 21:2) You grant⁴ him his heart’s desire;
you do not refuse his request.⁵ (Selah)

(Psa 21:3) For you bring him⁶ rich⁷ blessings;⁸ you place a golden crown on his head.

(Psa 21:4) He asked you to sustain his life,⁹ and you have granted him long life and an enduring dynasty.¹⁰

(Psa 21:5) Your deliverance brings him great honor;¹¹ you give him majestic splendor.¹²

(Psa 21:6) For you grant him lasting blessings; you give him great joy by allowing him into your presence.¹³

(Psa 21:7) For the king trusts¹⁴ in the LORD, and because of the sovereign LORD's¹⁵ faithfulness he is not upended.¹⁶

(Psa 21:8) You¹⁷ prevail over¹⁸ all your enemies; your power is too great for those who hate you.¹⁹

(Psa 21:9) You burn them up like a fiery furnace²⁰ when you appear;²¹ the LORD angrily devours them;²² the fire consumes them.

(Psa 21:10) You destroy their offspring²³ from the earth, their descendants²⁴ from among the human race.²⁵

(Psa 21:11) Yes,²⁶ they intend to do you harm;²⁷ they dream up a scheme,²⁸ but they do not succeed.²⁹

(Psa 21:12) For you make them retreat³⁰ when you shoot your arrows at them.³¹

(Psa 21:13) Rise up, O LORD, in strength!³²

We will sing and praise³³ your power!
(Psa 22:1) Psalm 221

For the music director; according to the tune “Morning
Doe;”² a psalm of David.

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?³
I groan in prayer, but help seems far away.⁴

(Guzik)
Psa 22:1-31

Psalms 22 – The Servant of God Forsaken, Rescued, and
Triumphant

This is another Psalm with a title: To the Chief Musician. Set
to “The Deer of the Dawn.” A Psalm of David. We can say
that this is a Psalm sung to the Greatest Musician, to an
unknown tune, but by the Sweet Psalmist of Israel. Yet in it
David sings as more than an artist, but as one of the
greatest prophets ever to speak, pointing more to his
Greater Son, Jesus the Messiah, than even to himself.

“This is a kind of gem among the Psalms, and is peculiarly
excellent and remarkable. It contains those deep, sublime,
and heavy sufferings of Christ, when agonizing in the midst
of the terrors and pangs of divine wrath and death which
surpass all human thought and comprehension.” (Luther,
cited in Spurgeon)

A. The agony of the Forsaken One.

1. (Psa_22:1-2) The cry of the forsaken.

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

Why are You so far from helping Me,

And from the words of My groaning?

O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent.

a. My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? This Psalm begins abruptly, with a disturbing scene:

someone who knows and trusts God is forsaken, and cries out to God in agony.

i. This is a Psalm of David, and there were many instances in the life of David where he might write such an agonized poem. Before and after taking the throne of Israel, David lived in seasons of great danger and deprivation.

ii. While this Psalm was certainly true of King David in his life experience, it – like many Psalms – is even truer of Jesus the Messiah than of David. Jesus deliberately chose these words to describe His agony on the cross (Mat_27:46).

iii. “We can be fairly certain that Jesus was meditating on the Old Testament during the hours of his suffering and that he saw his crucifixion as a fulfillment of Psalms 22 particularly.” (Boice)

iv. “I doubt not that David, though he had an eye to his own condition in divers passages here used, yet was carried forth by the Spirit of prophecy beyond himself, and unto Christ, to whom alone it truly and fully agrees.” (Poole)

b. My God, My God: This opening is powerful on at least two levels. The cry “My God” shows that the Forsaken One truly did have a relationship with God. He was a victim of the cruelty of men, but the cry and the complaint is to God –

even My God – and not to or against man. Second, the repetition of the plea shows the intensity of the agony.

i. “Then it was that he felt in soul and body the horror of God’s displeasure against sin, for which he had undertaken.” (Trapp)

c. Why have You forsaken Me? There is a note of surprise in this cry and in the following lines. The Forsaken One seems bewildered; “Why would My God forsake Me? Others may deserve such, but I cannot figure out why He would forsake Me.”

i. We may easily imagine a situation in the life of King David where he experienced this. Many times he found himself in seemingly impossible circumstances and wondered why God did not rescue him immediately.

ii. Yet beyond David and his life, this agonized cry and the intentional identification of Jesus with these words are some of most intense and mysterious descriptions of what Jesus experienced on the cross. Jesus had known great pain and suffering (both physical and emotional) during His life. Yet He had never known separation or alienation from God His Father. At this moment He experienced what He had not yet ever experienced. There was a significant sense in which Jesus rightly felt forsaken by God the Father at this moment.

iii. On the cross at that moment, a holy transaction took place. God the Father regarded God the Son as if He were a sinner. As the Apostle Paul would later write, God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2Co_5:21)

iv. Yet Jesus not only endured the withdrawal of the Father’s fellowship, but also the actual outpouring of the Father’s

wrath upon Him as a substitute for sinful humanity. "This was the blackness and darkness of his horror; then it was that he penetrated the depths of the caverns of suffering." (Spurgeon)

v. "To be forsaken means to have the light of God's countenance and the sense of his presence eclipsed, which is what happened to Jesus as he bore the wrath of God against sin for us." (Boice)

vi. "It was necessary that he should feel the loss of his Father's smile, - for the condemned in hell must have tasted of that bitterness; - and therefore the Father closed the eye of his love, put the hand of justice before the smile of his face, and left his Son to cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" (Spurgeon)

vii. Horrible as this was, it fulfilled God's good and loving plan of redemption. Therefore Isaiah could say Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him (Isa_53:10).

viii. At the same time, we cannot say that the separation between the Father and the Son at the cross was complete. Paul made this clear in 2Co_5:19 : God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself at the cross.

d. Why have You forsaken Me? There is a definite question in these words of David, and as Jesus appropriated them to Himself on the cross. What Jesus endured on the cross was so complex, so dark, and so mysterious that it was, at the moment, beyond His ability to figure out (at least in an emotional sense).

i. Spurgeon considered this question with an emphasis on the word, "You." " 'Thou:' I can understand why traitorous Judas and timid Peter should be gone, but thou, my God, my

faithful friend, how canst thou leave me? This is worst of all, yea worse than all put together. Hell itself has for its fiercest flame the separation of the soul from God.” (Spurgeon)

ii. We can imagine the answer to Jesus’ question: Why? “Because My Son, You have chosen to stand in the place of guilty sinners. You, who have never known sin, have made the infinite sacrifice to become sin and receive My just wrath upon sin and sinners. You do this because of Your great love, and because of My great love.”

iii. Then the Father might give the Son a glimpse of His reward – the righteously-robed multitude of His people on heaven’s golden streets, “all of them singing their redeemer’s praise, all of them chanting the name of Jehovah and the Lamb; and this was a part of the answer to his question.” (Spurgeon)

e. Why are You so far from helping Me? David knew what it was like to feel the presence and the deliverance of God, and had experienced such many times before. Every prior time of help made this dramatic absence of God’s help more devastating. Worse yet, there seemed to be no explanation for the lack of God’s help; thus the question, “Why?”

i. No doubt David experienced this, but only as a shadow compared to how Jesus experienced this. Prior to the cross Jesus lived every moment in conscious fellowship with God the Father, combined with a continual dependence upon the help of both the Father and the Spirit. At the cross, Jesus felt helpless, at it seemed that the Father was so far from helping Him.

f. O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear: A further dimension of David’s agony was the fact that he made repeated, constant appeals to God and yet felt utterly unheard. His groaning was unanswered, his cry ignored.

i. David certainly experienced this; the greater Son of David experienced it in a far greater degree. On the cross Jesus felt abandoned by the Father, and felt that His groaning and cries went unanswered.

2. (Psa_22:3-5) Remembrance of God's nature and prior help. But You are holy,
Enthroned in the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in You;
They trusted, and You delivered them.

They cried to You, and were delivered;

They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.

a. But You are holy: The Forsaken One remembered God and His greatness, even when immersed in suffering. He did not curse or blaspheme God, and he knew that his present agony did not change God's holiness (You are holy) or greatness (Enthroned in the praises of Israel).

i. We have the sense that the present crisis filled David (and the greater Son of David) with doubt and confusion, yet he would not allow doubts as to the holiness or greatness of God. Whatever he did not know in his present situation, there were some things that he did know.

ii. "Here is the triumph of faith—the Saviour stood like a rock in the wide ocean of temptation. High as the billows rose, so did his faith, like the coral rock, wax greater and stronger till it became an island of salvation to our shipwrecked souls. It is as if he had said, 'It matters not what I endure. Storms may howl upon me; men despise; devils tempt; circumstances overpower; and God himself forsake me, still God is holy; there is no unrighteousness in him.' "
(Stevenson, cited in Spurgeon)

iii. "We may not question the holiness of God, but we may argue from it, and use it as a plea in our petitions."
(Spurgeon)

b. Our fathers trusted in You...They cried to You, and were delivered: David also remembered how God had answered and delivered many times before. Strangely, this would add measures of both comfort and despair. Comfort, knowing that he cried to the same God who had delivered before and who could deliver again. Despair, knowing that the God who had delivered before now seemed so distant and silent.

i. We can almost hear the agony of the Forsaken One: "They cried to You, and were delivered; I cry to You and am ignored."

ii. Our fathers: "The use of the plural pronoun 'our' shows how one with his people Jesus was even on the cross."
(Spurgeon)

3. (Psa_22:6-8) Mocking the forsaken. But I am a worm, and no man;
A reproach of men, and despised by the people.

All those who see Me ridicule Me;
They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,

"He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him;

Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"

a. But I am a worm, and no man: The intensity of the conflict made David feel not only ignored, but insignificant. God seems to help other men, but seems to give no help to

worms. The low standing he had in his own eyes and in the eyes of others simply added to his agony.

i. “This verse is a miracle in language. How could the Lord of glory be brought to such abasement as to be not only lower than the angels, but even lower than men. What a contrast between ‘I am’ and ‘I am a worm’!” (Spurgeon)

ii. “He felt himself to be comparable to a helpless, powerless, down-trodden worm, passive while crushed, and unnoticed and despised by those who trod upon him. He selects the weakest of creatures, which is all flesh; and becomes, when trodden upon, writhing, quivering flesh, utterly devoid of any might except strength to suffer. This was a true likeness of himself when his body and soul had become a mass of misery—the very essence of agony—in the dying pangs of crucifixion.” (Spurgeon)

iii. It was dramatically fulfilled in the greater Son of David, that on the cross He was a reproach of men, and despised by the people. Cruel men mocked Jesus in His greatest agony (Mat_27:39-44).

b. They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, “He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him”: David’s misery multiplied at those who mocked and misunderstood his agony. They used it all as an excuse to call into question his relationship with God, even as the friends of Job did with that sufferer.

i. It was as if they said, “It seemed that he trusted in the Lord, but we all know that the Lord rescues those who trust in Him. It seemed that he delighted in God, but that must be false because he is not delivered.”

ii. He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him: If Jesus identified with the opening words of Psalms 22 with His great cry from the cross (Mat_27:46), then His enemies unwittingly identified with the scornful enemies of God and His Anointed in their mockery of Jesus on the cross (Mat_27:43 : He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now...).

iii. Spurgeon preached a sermon (Faith Among Mockers) where he considered the implication of this word against the Forsaken One, "He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him."

- · In a truly grace-filled man, his trust in God is known.

- · This trust by believing men is not understood by the world.

- · This true faith will almost certainly be mocked at some time or another.

- · The time shall come when the man of faith who has trusted in God shall be abundantly justified.

c. Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him: This statement reveals the frequent ignorance and cruelty of those who oppose God and His people. It claimed to see no deliverance, when it would indeed come soon. It also questioned the delight of God in the Forsaken One, when God did and does truly delight in that one.

i. "A most virulent irony, whereby they sought to cajole him out of his confidence, and so to drive him into utter desperation and destruction." (Trapp)

4. (Psa_22:9-11) A plea: "You are my God since the earliest days." But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts.

I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb
You have been My God.

Be not far from Me, For trouble is near;
For there is none to help.

a. But You are He who took Me out of the womb: David understood – both for himself and, prophetically speaking, for the later-to-come Messiah – that in the depth of agony and the sense of abandonment, one could still appeal to God in remembrance of better times.

i. The Forsaken One did not say, “Since I feel abandoned by God, I will abandon Him.” He remained steadfast through the dark night of the soul, and still made appeal to the God who cared for Him since birth.

ii. “That Child now fighting the great battle of his life, uses the mercy of his nativity as an argument with God. Faith finds weapons everywhere. He who wills to believe shall never lack reasons for believing.” (Spurgeon)

b. Out of the womb...while on My mother's breasts...from birth...You have been My God: The Forsaken One argued on good, logical grounds. He reminded God of the care given since His very earliest days. That prior grace might seem to be wasted if the sufferer was not rescued in His present crisis.

i. “They are the personal application of the wide truth that God by His making us men gives us a claim on Him, that He has bound Himself by giving life to give what is needful for its development and well-being.” (Maclaren)

c. Be not far from Me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help: The plea for help is again eloquently and persuasively

stated. God seems far away; but trouble is near – and there is none to help, so You must help me, God!

5. (Psa_22:12-18) The agony of the forsaken. Many bulls have surrounded Me;
Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.

They gape at Me with their mouths,

Like a raging and roaring lion. I am poured out like water,
And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax;
It has melted within Me.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue
clings to My jaws;
You have brought Me to the dust of death.

For dogs have surrounded Me;
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They
pierced My hands and My feet;
I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.
They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing
they cast lots.

a. Many bulls have surrounded Me: The Forsaken One again describes His crisis. He described the people tormenting Him as strong bulls of Bashan, large animals proverbial for their strength. They surround Him and threaten Him.

i. “The bull is the emblem of brutal strength, that gores and tramples down all before it.” (Clarke)

ii. “The priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, rulers, and captains bellowed round the cross like wild cattle, fed in the fat and solitary pastures of Bashan, full of strength and fury;

they stamped and foamed around the innocent One, and longed to gore him to death with their cruelties.” (Spurgeon)

b. I am poured out like water: The Forsaken One felt completely empty. He perceived no resource in Himself able to meet the crisis at hand. Whatever strength or resistance He had was poured out like water upon the ground.

i. “My heart faileth, my spirits are spent and gone like water, which once spilt can never be recovered; my very flesh is melted within me, and I am become as weak as water.” (Poole)

c. My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me: This described the physical extremity of David at the time, but it also is an amazingly specific prophecy of the future suffering of the Son of David on the cross.

i. The deliberately awkward and strained position of the crucified man meant that one of the cross could say, “My bones are out of joint.” David did not know the practice of crucifixion in his day, but he described the physical agony of it with the accuracy of a prophet of the Lord.

ii. There is also some reason to believe (based mainly on Joh_19:34) that on the cross Jesus suffered from a ruptured heart, making the words “My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me” also amazingly specific.

iii. My tongue clings to My jaws: As was normal for anyone under the agony of crucifixion, Jesus suffered great thirst on the cross (Joh_19:28).

d. You have brought me to the dust of death: David used this moving poetic phrase to describe the extent of his misery.

He probably had in mind the curse God pronounced upon Adam after his sin: For dust you are, and to dust you shall return (Gen_3:19). Since all humanity was contained in Adam, this curse extends to the entire human race, and David felt himself close to the dust of death.

i. Obviously, David did not die in the crisis described by this Psalm; he lived to write it and others. He came to the edge of mortality when God brought him to the dust of death. Yet Jesus, the Son of David, did not merely come to the edge of death; He was plunged into the dust of death and into all of the cursedness implied by that. Jesus bore the sting of Adam's curse for us (Gal_3:3) so that we would not have to bear it ourselves.

ii. "In regard, however, to the faintness which our Lord experienced, we ought to notice this additional and remarkable circumstance, that he did not altogether faint away. The relief of insensibility he refused to take. When consciousness ceases, all perception of pain is necessarily and instantly terminated. But our Lord retained his full consciousness throughout this awful scene." (Stevenson, cited in Spurgeon)

e. For dogs have surrounded Me; the assembly of the wicked has enclosed Me: David's crisis would be bad enough even if surrounded by sympathetic friends; his misery was multiplied because there were violent and wicked men on every side.

i. In His death, the Son of David had few sympathizers. Haters, scoffers, and mockers surrounded Jesus on the cross and sought to make His suffering worse (Mat_27:39-44, Mar_15:29-32).

f. They pierced My hands and My feet: Perhaps here David referred to wounds he received in struggling against these determined enemies; perhaps he wrote purely prophetically. In any regard, hundreds of years before the Romans adopted the Persian practice of crucifixion, the prophet David described the wounds of crucifixion that his Greater Son would bear.

i. The Masoretic Hebrew text of Psa_22:16 doesn't say pierced, it says "as a lion." Yet the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the Old Testament – long before the Christian era – renders the Hebrew text as saying pierced. While the Masoretic text shouldn't be casually disregarded, there is good reason to side with the Septuagint and almost every other translation here. "It may even suggest that the Masoretic text was deliberately pointed in the way it was by later Jewish scholars to avoid what otherwise would be a nearly inescapable prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion." (Boice)

g. I can count all My bones: David examined his wounds and understood that he had no broken bones. The Son of David also, despite his great suffering on the cross, suffered no broken bones. John carefully noted this (Joh_19:31-37). It fulfilled this prophecy, as well as Psa_34:20 and the pattern of the Passover lamb as described in Exo_12:46 and Num_9:12.

h. They look and stare at Me: In his crisis, David was the focus of unwanted attention. His tormentors did not allow him the dignity of private suffering, but exposed all things to their stare. David's Great Son also found no place to hide from the unwanted stares of cruel, mocking men at the cross.

i. On the cross Jesus was the focus not only of mocking and humiliation (Mat_27:39-44, Mar_15:29-32), but also of

simple astonishment, as when the centurion said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Mat_27:54) Luke also noted, the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned (Luk_23:48).

ii. “ ‘They look and stare upon me.’ Oh, how different is that look which the awakened sinner directs to Calvary, when faith lifts up her eye to him who agonised, and bled, and died, for the guilty!” (Morison, cited in Spurgeon)

i. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots: David was so humbled before his adversaries, so powerless against them, that they took even his clothing and used it for themselves.

i. As with other aspects of Psalms 22, this was fulfilled even more literally in the experience of Jesus than in the life of David. As was the custom of that time, Jesus was stripped naked or nearly naked for the cross, and soldiers gambled (cast lots) for his clothing at the very foot of the cross. Joh_19:23-24 and Mat_27:35 quote this line of Psalms 22 as being fulfilled.

ii. “Unholy eyes gazed insultingly upon the Saviour’s nakedness, and shocked the sacred delicacy of his holy soul. The sight of the agonizing body ought to have ensured sympathy from the throng, but it only increased their savage mirth, as they gloated their cruel eyes upon his miseries.” (Spurgeon)

6. (Psa_22:19-21 a) A plea for help and deliverance. But You,
O Lord, do not be far from Me;
O My Strength, hasten to help Me!

Deliver Me from the sword,

My precious life from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth
And from the horns of the wild oxen!

a. But You, O Lord, do not be far from Me: The request of Psa_22:11 is here repeated. David seemed to believe that he could endure anything if he enjoyed the conscious presence of God. His plea is not focused on the change of his situation, but on the presence of God in the crisis.

b. Hasten to help Me...Deliver Me...Save Me: Picturing his adversaries as vicious animals (the dog...the lion's mouth...the horns of the wild oxen), David pled for the help and deliverance the presence of God brings.

i. These lines reflect not only the great danger and misery of both David and his Greater Son, but especially their trust in the Lord God as their deliverer. He and He alone is their hope.

ii. Deliver Me from the sword: "The wrath of God was the 'sword,' which took vengeance on all men in their representative; it was the 'flaming sword,' which kept men out of paradise." (Horne)

B. The answer to the Forsaken One.

1. (Psa_22:21-23) The Forsaken One praises God among His people. You have answered Me.

I will declare Your name to My brethren;

In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the Lord, praise Him!

All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,

And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!

a. You have answered Me: After pouring out His soul in agony, now the Forsaken One has a glorious sense that God has answered Him. The crisis became bearable in the knowledge that God is not removed from our suffering nor silent in it.

i. The answer of God to the Forsaken One instantly meant that He no longer felt forsaken. The deliverance from the crisis itself may be yet to come, but the deliverance from the sense of being forsaken by God in the midst of the crisis was his. There is immense relief, joy, and peace in the words, "You have answered Me."

ii. "As he thus cries, the conviction that he is heard floods his soul, and he ends, not with a cry for help, but with that one rapturous word, 'Thou hast answered me.' It is like a parting burst of sunshine at the end of a day of tempest." (Maclaren)

iii. It is easy to see these words fulfilled in the experience of David; but perfectly completed in Jesus. This was also the resolution that another forsaken one – Job – fought so hard for. Even without an immediate deliverance from difficulty, there is immense comfort in knowing that God is there and that He is not silent in the midst of our crisis.

iv. Knowing that Jesus fulfilled this prophetic Psalm, it is fair to wonder just when He could speak or live the fulfillment of these words, "You have answered Me." Perhaps – thought impossible to say with certainty – it was while He still hung on the cross, yet after the mysterious, glorious transaction of bearing the sin of mankind. Perhaps it was after the triumphant announcement, It is finished! (Joh_19:30), yet before (or even in) the warm words, Father, into Your hands I commend My Spirit (Luk_23:46). Those words point to a re-established sense of fellowship replacing the prior sense of forsakenness.

b. I will declare Your name to My brethren: Having been delivered – if not from the crisis itself, certainly from the sense of being forsaken in the crisis – now the promise is made to glorify and praise the God of deliverance. Others needed to know of God’s greatness in such extremity.

i. Heb_2:12 quotes the second half of Psalms 22 (specifically, Psa_22:22), proving clearly that the entire Psalm points to Jesus, not just the agony of the first half.

ii. On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus prayed a glorious prayer, and one line of that prayer reads: I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it (Joh_17:26). Those words, prayed in the shadow of the cross, can be understood as a deliberate desire to fulfill this word in Psalms

22, I will declare Your name to My brethren. Jesus understood that His obedient work on the cross would bring great glory to His God and Father, declaring the greatness of His name.

iii. We may say that this section of Psalms 22 reflects the primary reason Jesus went to the cross: to glorify and obey His God and Father.

c. You who fear the Lord, praise Him! The command is given to praise, to glorify, and to fear the Lord. The God of such great deliverance deserves all three things from all humanity.

i. We prophetically see in this section Jesus doing two great things in the aftermath of His great work on the cross:

- · Jesus declares God's name (I will declare Your name to My brethren)

- · Jesus leads the Redeemed in praise (In the midst of the assembly I will praise You)

ii. Of this second point, Spurgeon observed: "I like to think that when we pray on earth our prayers are not alone, but our great High Priest is there to offer our petitions with his own. When we sing on earth it is the same. Is not Jesus Christ in the midst of the congregation, gathering up all the notes which come from sincere lips, to put them into the golden censer, and to make them rise as precious incense before the throne of the infinite majesty?" (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_22:24-25) Praising the God who answers the forsaken.

For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;
But when He cried to Him, He heard.

My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.

a. For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted: David's triumphant words – again, perfectly fulfilled in his greater son Jesus – reflect a profound spiritual wisdom and depth. The God who answers the Forsaken One still allowed the affliction of the afflicted; yet He has not despised or abhorred it. God has used and would use that affliction to good and great purpose.

i. Some of God's people automatically associate all affliction with the disfavor of God. It is true that sometimes affliction may come as punishment (for the unbeliever) or as discipline (for the believer). Yet sometimes affliction is

something God does not despise, and uses to good effect in the lives of His people.

ii. It is in this sense that the words of Isa_53:10 were fulfilled: Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. The affliction was not despised.

b. Nor has He hidden His face from Him: Certainly David (and the greater Son of David) felt that the Father hid His face (Why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me?... You do not hear, Psa_22:1-2). Yet now, after God's answer has come (Psa_22:21 b), it is clear that He never did leave the afflicted, even in the midst of the affliction.

c. But when He cried to Him, He heard: The answer seemed an intolerably long time in coming, but it came. David and the Son of David could both say, "He heard My cry."

d. My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay my vows: There are two aspects to a right response to such a wonderful deliverance. The first is public praise, the second is keeping promises.

3. (Psa_22:26-27) Others who rejoice in the God who answers. The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
Those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let your heart live forever!
All the ends of the world

Shall remember and turn to the Lord, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.

a. The poor shall eat and be satisfied: If God shows such faithfulness to the afflicted, there is hope for the poor. The good God will take care of the poor who trust Him and seek Him. They will praise the Lord also.

i. The faithfulness of God to the Forsaken One becomes a foundation for His faithfulness to others in need, such as the poor. His satisfaction in the work of the Son of David means grace and blessing and joy (Let your heart live forever!) for others.

b. Those who seek Him will praise the Lord: There is a promise in this, that those who seek Him will in fact find the Lord, and thus they will praise Him.

i. "There are souls now weeping for sin and longing for a Savior who will soon find him, and then will become most hearty singers of the new song. They are coming, coming in their thousands even now. The music of praise shall be continued as long as the sun, and the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. From generation to generation shall the name of the Lord be praised." (Spurgeon)

c. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord: The faithfulness of God to the Forsaken One even becomes the base for bringing all the ends of the world to the Lord. Not only is it true that the Lord has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted (Psa_22:24), but He uses that affliction to reach all the ends of the world for the knowledge of God, repentance unto Him, and His worship (all the families of the nations shall worship before You).

i. We may say that this section of Psalms 22 shows the second great reason why Jesus went to the cross: out of simple love for those who would believe on Him and His saving work, and therefore remember and turn to the Lord. It is not an overly-sentimental exaggeration to say that Jesus

thought of His redeemed and loved them up to the cross and on the cross.

ii. As Heb_12:2 says of Jesus: who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame. Psalms 22 powerfully displays that joy, both in His obedience to and glorifying of His God and Father, and the joy of rescuing and loving those who would trust on Him; that there would be brethren that He declared the name of God unto (Psa_22:22).

iii. "In that last happy interval, before he actually gave up his soul into his Father's hands, his thoughts rushed forward and found a blessed place of rest in the prospect that, as the result of his death, all the kindreds of the nations would worship before the Lord, and that by a chosen seed the Most High should be honored." (Spurgeon)

iv. "I think that is an absolutely wonderful thought and one that should move us to the most intense love for and devotion to Jesus Christ. You and I were in Jesus' thoughts at the very moment of his death. It was for you and me explicitly and for our salvation from sin that he was dying." (Boice)

4. (Psa_22:28-31) Enduring praise for a faithful God. For the kingdom is the Lord's,
And He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship;
All those who go down to the dust

Shall bow before Him,
Even he who cannot keep himself alive. A posterity shall serve Him.
It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation,

They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.

a. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations: The experience of affliction and crisis did not make the formerly Forsaken One lose any sense of confidence in God's power and authority. The Lord's reign over the nations makes sense of both His prior crisis and the call to all nations to worship before the Lord (Psa_22:27).

i. This reminds us that one day Jesus will reign over all nations. It would be unthinkable otherwise. "Is Christ, the great King, satisfied to settle down in a corner of the world as ruler over one scanty province? Think ye that he doth not expect to divide the spoil with the strong when the nations shall flock unto him, and their kings shall bow down before him? Brethren, the present state of affairs does nor satisfy us, and since our Lord's heart is larger than ours, it surely does not satisfy him." (Spurgeon)

ii. "Our new-born nature craves for the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, and prays for it instinctively." (Spurgeon)

b. All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship; all those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him: The Lord God is so highly exalted that all honor Him, both the prosperous of the earth and those who go down to the dust.

i. It is of note that though all honor the Lord, they honor Him in different ways. The prosperous of the earth enjoy a fellowship meal and worship God. In contrast, those who go down to the dust simply bow before the Lord in humbled reverence.

ii. This has much the same idea as the later passage of the Apostle Paul, when he wrote: that at the name of Jesus every

knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Php_2:10-11).

iii. Those who go down to the dust suggests those who are rightly humbled, but it can also be understood in a broader sense. Earlier in the Psalm dust suggested the mortality of man and his place under the curse (Psa_22:15). David may here use “those who go down to the dust” as a simple representation of all humanity.

iv. If this is true, then the phrase “Even he who cannot keep himself alive” follows the same thought. It is a suggestive phrase, especially considering the connection in this Psalm with Jesus the Messiah, the greater Son of David. Of all humanity, Jesus was singular as One who could keep himself alive. Jesus Himself said of His life, No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.

I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again (Joh_10:18).

c. A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation: The faithfulness of God unto the formerly Forsaken One is told throughout the generations, bringing great glory to the Lord. They will all look at what has been accomplished in and through the formerly Forsaken One and hear, “That He has done this.”

· · This results in service through the generations (a posterity shall serve Him)

· · This results in God’s fame through the generations (It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation)

· · This results in the spread of the message of God's righteousness through the generations (They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born)

i. We can say that Jesus thought of His Jewish brothers on the cross (My brethren, Psa_22:22).

He thought of the Gentiles who come into the assembly of the redeemed (in the great congregation, Psa_22:25). He even thought of future generations who He would rescue and who would trust Him (to the next generation...to a people who will be born, Psa_22:30-31).

ii. "Finally the vision extends to unborn generations (Psa_22:30 f.), in terms which anticipate the preaching of the cross, recounting God's righteousness (or deliverance, a secondary meaning of the word) revealed in the action He has taken." (Kidner)

iii. This all adds to the wonderful truth – true for King David of Israel, but far more gloriously fulfilled in Jesus Christ – that none of the Forsaken One's sufferings were wasted. Every drop of that cup of agony was and is used to the great glory of God.

iv. In the fullest measure, Jesus appropriated the victory of the second half of this Psalm just as much as He did the agony of the first half. "Just before He died, Jesus cried out, 'It is finished' (Joh_19:30). This is a quotation from the last verse of Psalms 22. In our text that verse reads, 'he has done it,' referring to God as subject. But there is no object for the verb in Hebrew, and it can equally well be translated, 'It is finished.'" (Boice)

v. "The psalm which began with the cry of dereliction ends with the word he has wrought it, and announcement not far removed from our Lord's great cry, 'It is finished.'" (Kidner)

(Psa 22:2) My God, I cry out during the day, but you do not answer,
and during the night my prayers do not let up.⁵

(Psa 22:3) You are holy;
you sit as king receiving the praises of Israel.⁶

(Psa 22:4) In you our ancestors⁷ trusted;
they trusted in you⁸ and you rescued them.

(Psa 22:5) To you they cried out, and they were saved;
in you they trusted and they were not disappointed.⁹

(Psa 22:6) But I¹⁰ am a worm,¹¹ not a man;¹² people insult me and despise me.¹³

(Psa 22:7) All who see me taunt¹⁴ me;
they mock me¹⁵ and shake their heads.¹⁶

(Psa 22:8) They say,¹⁷
“Commit yourself¹⁸ to the LORD! Let the LORD¹⁹ rescue him!
Let the LORD²⁰ deliver him, for he delights in him.”²¹

(Psa 22:9) Yes, you are the one who brought me out²² from the womb and made me feel secure on my mother’s breasts.

(Psa 22:10) I have been dependent on you since birth;²³
from the time I came out of my mother’s womb you have been my God.²⁴

(Psa 22:11) Do not remain far away from me,
for trouble is near and I have no one to help me.²⁵ (Psa 22:12) Many bulls²⁶ surround me;
powerful bulls of Bashan²⁷ hem me in.

(Psa 22:13) They²⁸ open their mouths to devour me²⁹ like a roaring lion that rips its prey.³⁰

(Psa 22:14) My strength drains away like water;³¹ all my bones are dislocated;
my heart³² is like wax;
it melts away inside me.

(Psa 22:15) The roof of my mouth³³ is as dry as a piece of pottery;
my tongue sticks to my gums.³⁴
You³⁵ set me in the dust of death.³⁶

(Psa 22:16) Yes,³⁷ wild dogs surround me —
a gang of evil men crowd around me;
like a lion they pin my hands and feet.³⁸

(Psa 22:17) I can count³⁹ all my bones;
my enemies⁴⁰ are gloating over me in triumph.⁴¹

(Psa 22:18) They are dividing up my clothes among themselves;
they are rolling dice⁴² for my garments.

(Psa 22:19) But you, O LORD, do not remain far away!
You are my source of strength!⁴³ Hurry and help me!⁴⁴

(Psa 22:20) Deliver me⁴⁵ from the sword!
Save⁴⁶ my life⁴⁷ from the claws⁴⁸ of the wild dogs!

(Psa 22:21) Rescue me from the mouth of the lion,⁴⁹ and
from the horns of the wild oxen!⁵⁰
You have answered me!⁵¹

(Psa 22:22) I will declare your name to my countrymen!⁵²

In the middle of the assembly I will praise you!

(Psa 22:23) You loyal followers of the LORD,⁵³ praise him!
All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!
All you descendants of Israel, stand in awe of him!⁵⁴

(Psa 22:24) For he did not despise or detest the suffering⁵⁵
of the oppressed;⁵⁶ he did not ignore him;⁵⁷
when he cried out to him, he responded.⁵⁸

(Psa 22:25) You are the reason I offer praise⁵⁹ in the great
assembly; I will fulfill my promises before the LORD's loyal
followers.⁶⁰

(Psa 22:26) Let the oppressed eat and be filled!⁶¹
Let those who seek his help praise the LORD! May you⁶² live
forever!

(Psa 22:27) Let all the people of the earth acknowledge the
LORD and turn to him!⁶³
Let all the nations⁶⁴ worship you!⁶⁵

(Psa 22:28) For the LORD is king⁶⁶ and rules over the
nations.

(Psa 22:29) All of the thriving people⁶⁷ of the earth will join
the celebration and worship;⁶⁸ all those who are descending
into the grave⁶⁹ will bow before him,
including those who cannot preserve their lives.⁷⁰

(Psa 22:30) A whole generation⁷¹ will serve him;
they will tell the next generation about the sovereign Lord.
⁷²

(Psa 22:31) They will come and tell about his saving
deeds;⁷³

they will tell a future generation what he has accomplished.⁷⁴
(Psa 23:1) Psalm 23

A psalm of David.

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

(Guzik)
Psa 23:1-6

Psalms 23 - The Lord Is My Shepherd and My Host

Like many others, this beloved Psalm bears the simple title, A Psalm of David. Most account it to be a Psalm of David's maturity, but with vivid remembrance of his youth as a shepherd. Spurgeon wrote, "I like to recall the fact that this Psalm was written by David, probably when he was a king. He had been a shepherd, and he was not ashamed of his former occupation."

"It has charmed more griefs to rest than all the philosophy of the world. It has remanded to their dungeon more felon thoughts, more black doubts, more thieving sorrows, than there are sands on the sea-shore. It has comforted the noble host of the poor. It has sung courage to the army of the disappointed. It has poured balm and consolation into the heart of the sick, of captives in dungeons, of widows in their pinching griefs, of orphans in their loneliness. Dying soldiers have died easier as it was read to them; ghastly hospitals have been illuminated; it has visited the prisoner, and broken his chains, and, like Peter's angel, led him forth in imagination, and sung him back to his home again. It has made the

dying Christian slave freer than his master, and consoled those whom, dying, he left behind mourning, not so much

that

he was gone, as because they were left behind, and could not go too.” (Beecher, cited in Spurgeon)

“Millions of people have memorized this psalm, even those who have learned few other Scripture portions. Ministers have used it to comfort people who are going through severe personal trials, suffering illness, or dying. For some, the words of this psalm have been the last they have ever uttered in life.” (Boice)

A. The Lord as Shepherd sustains.

1. (Psa_23:1) A declaration and its immediate result. The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.

a. The Lord is my shepherd: David thought about God, the God of Israel; as he thought about his relationship with God, he made the analogy of a Shepherd and his sheep. God was like a shepherd to David, and David was like a sheep to God.

i. In one sense, this was not unusual. There are other references to this analogy between the deity and his followers in ancient Middle Eastern cultures. “In all Eastern thought, and very definitely in Biblical literature, a king is a shepherd.” (Morgan)

ii. It is also a familiar idea throughout the Bible, that the Lord is a Shepherd to His people. The idea begins as early as the Book of Genesis, where Moses called the Lord the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel (Gen_49:24).

· · In Psa_28:9 David invited the Lord to shepherd the people of Israel, and to bear them up forever. Psa_80:1 also looks to

the Lord as the Shepherd of Israel, who would lead Joseph like a flock.

· · Ecc_12:11 speaks of the words of the wise, which are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

· · Isa_40:11 tells us that the Lord will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm. Mic_7:14 invites the Lord to Shepherd Your people with Your staff...As in days of old.

· · Zec_13:7 speaks of the Messiah as the Shepherd who will be struck, and the sheep scattered (quoted in Mat_26:31).

· · In Joh_10:11; Joh_10:14 Jesus clearly spoke of Himself as the good shepherd, who gives His life for the sheep and who can say, "I know My sheep, and am known by My own." Heb_13:20 speaks of Jesus as that great Shepherd of the sheep, and 1Pe_2:25 calls Jesus the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls and 1Pe_5:4 calls Jesus the Chief Shepherd.

· · The idea of Jesus as the Good Shepherd was precious to early Christians. One of the more common motifs in catacomb paintings is Jesus as a shepherd, with a lamb carried across His shoulders.

iii. It's remarkable that the Lord would call Himself our shepherd. "In Israel, as in other ancient societies, a shepherd's work was considered the lowest of all works. If a family needed a shepherd, it was always the youngest son, like David, who got this unpleasant assignment....Jehovah has chosen to be our shepherd, David says. The great God of the universe has stooped to take just such care of you and me." (Boice)

iv. "Saith Rabbi Joseph Bar Hamna, there is not a more contemptible office than that of a shepherd...But God disdaineth not to feed his flock, to guide, to govern, to defend them, to handle and heal them, to tend and take care of them." (Trapp)

v. David knew this metaphor in a unique way, having been a shepherd himself. "David uses the most comprehensive and intimate metaphor yet encountered in the Psalms, preferring usually the more distant 'king' or 'deliverer', or the impersonal 'rock', 'shield', etc.; whereas the shepherd lives with his flock and is everything to it: guide, physician and protector." (Kidner)

b. The Lord is my shepherd: David knew this in a personal sense. He could say, "my shepherd." It wasn't just that the Lord was a shepherd for others in theoretical sense; He was a real, personal shepherd for David himself.

i. "A sheep is an object of property, not a wild animal; its owner sets great store by it, and frequently it is bought with a great price. It is well to know, as certainly as David did, that we belong to the Lord. There is a noble tone of confidence about this sentence. There is no 'if' nor 'but,' nor even 'I hope so;' but he says, 'The Lord is my shepherd.'" (Spurgeon)

ii. "The sweetest word of the whole is that monosyllable, 'My.' He does not say, 'The Lord is the shepherd of the world at large, and leadeth forth the multitude as his flock,' but 'The Lord is my shepherd;' if he be a Shepherd to no one else, he is a Shepherd to me; he cares for me, watches over me, and preserves me." (Spurgeon)

iii. Overwhelmingly, the idea behind God's role as shepherd is a loving care and concern. David found comfort and

security in the thought that God cared for him like a shepherd cares for his sheep.

iv. David felt that he needed a shepherd. The heart of this Psalm doesn't connect with the self-sufficient. But those who acutely sense their need - the poor in spirit Jesus described in the Sermon on the Mount (Mat_5:2) - find great comfort in the idea that God can be a shepherd to them in a personal sense.

v. Spurgeon said that before a man can truly say, "the Lord is my shepherd" he must first feel himself to be a sheep by nature, "for he cannot know that God is his Shepherd unless he feels in himself that he has the nature of a sheep." He must relate to a sheep in its foolishness, its dependency, and in the warped nature of its will.

vi. "A sheep, saith Aristotle, is a foolish and sluggish creature...aptest of anything to wander, though it feel no want, and unablest to return...a sheep can make no shift to save itself from tempests or inundation; there it stands and will perish, if not driven away by the shepherd." (Trapp)

c. I shall not want: For David, the fact of God's shepherd-like care was the end of dissatisfied need. He said, "I shall not want" both as a declaration and as a decision.

i. "I shall not want" means, "All my needs are supplied by the Lord, my shepherd."

ii. "I shall not want" means, "I decide to not desire more than what the Lord, my shepherd gives."

2. (Psa_23:2) How the Shepherd sustains. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

a. He makes me to lie down: The Lord as a shepherd knew how to make David rest when he needed it, just as a literal shepherd would care for his sheep. The implication is that the sheep doesn't always know what it needs and what is best for itself, and so needs the help from the shepherd.

i. "The loveliest image afforded by the natural world, is here represented to the imagination; that of a flock, feeding in verdant meadows, and reposing, in quietness, by the rivers of water, running gently through them." (Horne)

b. To lie down in green pastures: The shepherd also knew the good places to make his sheep rest. He faithfully guides the sheep to green pastures.

i. Philip Keller (in A Shepherd Looks at Psalms 23) writes that sheep do not lie down easily, and will not unless four conditions are met. Because they are timid they will not lie down if they are afraid. Because they are social animals they will not lie down if there is friction among the sheep. If flies or parasites trouble them they will not lie down. Finally, if sheep are anxious about food or hungry they will not lie down. Rest comes because the shepherd has dealt with fear, friction, flies, and famine.

c. He leads me beside the still waters: The shepherd knows when the sheep needs green pastures, and knows when the sheep needs the still waters. The images are rich with the sense of comfort, care, and rest.

B. The Lord as Shepherd leads.

1. (Psa_23:3) Where the Shepherd leads and why. He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness

For His name's sake.

a. He restores my soul: The tender care of the shepherd described in the previous verse had its intended effect. David's soul was restored by the figurative green pastures and still waters the shepherd brought him to.

i. Restores may picture the rescue of a lost one. "It may picture the straying sheep brought back, as in Isa_49:5, or perhaps Psa_60:1 (Hebrew 60:3), which use the same verb, whose intransitive sense is often 'repent' or 'be converted' (eg. Hos_14:1 f.; Joe_2:12)." (Kidner)

ii. "In Hebrew the words 'restores my soul' can mean 'brings me to repentance' (or conversion)." (Boice)

iii. " 'He restoreth my soul.' He restores it to its original purity, that was now grown foul and black with sin; for also, what good were it to have 'green' pastures and a black soul!" (Baker, cited in Spurgeon)

b. He leads me: The shepherd was a guide. The sheep didn't need to know where the green pastures or still waters were; all he needed to know was where the shepherd was. The shepherd would guide the sheep to what he needed.

c. In the paths of righteousness: The leadership of the shepherd did not only comfort and restore the sheep; he also guides him into righteousness. God's guidance of David had a moral aspect.

i. "They are thenceforth led in 'the path of righteousness'; in the way of holy obedience. Obstructions are removed; they are strengthened, to walk and run in the paths of God's commandments." (Horne)

d. For His name's sake: The shepherd guides the sheep with an overarching view to the credit and glory of the shepherd's own name.

i. For His name's sake: "To display the glory of his grace, and not on account of any merit in me. God's motives of conduct towards the children of men are derived from the perfections and goodness of his own nature." (Clarke)

2. (Psa_23:4) The gift of the Shepherd's presence.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

a. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death: This is the first dark note in this beautiful Psalm. Previously David wrote of green pastures and still waters and paths of righteousness. Yet when following the Lord as shepherd, one may still walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

i. David used this powerful phrase to speak of some kind of dark, fearful experience. It is an imprecise phrase, yet its poetry makes perfect sense.

- · It is a valley, not a mountaintop or broad meadow. A valley suggests being hedged in and surrounded.

- · It is a valley of the shadow of death, facing what seemed to David as the ultimate defeat and evil.

- · It is a valley of the shadow of death; not facing the substance of death itself, but the shadow of death, casting

its dark, fearful outline across David's path.

ii. Notably, David recognized that under the shepherd's leading he may walk through the valley of the shadow of death. It isn't his destination or dwelling place. Like the Preacher in Ecclesiastes, David might say that all of life is lived under the shadow of death, and it is the conscious presence of the Lord as shepherd that makes it bearable.

iii. This line is especially suggestive when we read this Psalm with an eye towards Jesus, the Great Shepherd. We understand that a shadow is not tangible, but is cast by something that is. One can rightly say that we face only the shadow of death because Jesus took the full reality of death in our place.

b. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death: This line from the Psalm – and the Psalm as a whole – has proven itself precious to many a dying saint through the ages. They have been comforted, strengthened, and warmed by the thought that the Lord would shepherd them through the valley of the shadow of death.

i. Near death, the saint still calmly walks – he does not need to quicken his pace in alarm or panic. Near death, the saint does not walk in the valley, but through the valley.

ii. "Death in its substance has been removed, and only the shadow of it remains. Some one has said that when there is a shadow there must be light somewhere, and so there is. Death stands by the side of the highway in which we have to travel, and the light of heaven shining upon him throws a shadow across our path; let us then rejoice that there is a light beyond. Nobody is afraid of a shadow, for a shadow cannot stop a man's pathway even for a moment. The

shadow of a dog cannot bite; the shadow of a sword cannot kill; the shadow of death cannot destroy us.” (Spurgeon)

iii. “It has an inexpressibly delightful application to the dying; but it is for the living, too...The words are not in the future tense, and therefore are not reserved for a distant moment.” (Spurgeon)

c. I will fear no evil: Despite every dark association with the idea of the valley of the shadow of death, under the care of the Lord his shepherd, David could resolutely say this. Even in a fearful place, the presence of the shepherd banished the fear of evil.

i. We might say that the shepherd’s presence did not eliminate the presence of evil, but certainly the fear of evil.

d. For You are with me: This emphasizes that it is the presence of the shepherd that eliminated the fear of evil for His sheep. No matter his present environment, David could look to the fact of God’s shepherd-like presence and know, “You are with me” and “I will fear no evil.”

i. Significantly, it is at the dangerous moment pictured in the Psalm that the “He” of [Psa_23:1-3](#) changes to “You.” The Lord as Shepherd is now in the first person.

e. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me: The rod and the staff were instruments used by a shepherd. The idea is of a sturdy walking stick, used to gently (as possible) guide the sheep and to protect from potential predators.

i. There is some debate among commentators as to if David had the idea of two separate instruments (the rod and the staff), or one instrument used two ways. The Hebrew word

for rod (shaybet) here seems to simply mean “a stick” with a variety of applications. The Hebrew word for staff (mishaynaw) seems to speak of “a support” in the sense of a walking stick.

ii. Kidner notes: “The rod (a cudgel worn at the belt) and staff (to walk with, and to round up the flock) were the shepherd’s weapon and implement: the former for defence (cf. 1Sa_17:35), and the latter for control – since discipline is security.”

iii. Maclaren writes: “The rod and the staff seem to be two names for one instrument, which was used both to beat off predatory animals and to direct the sheep.”

iv. This instrument (or instruments) of guidance was a comfort to David. It helped him – even in the valley of the shadow of death – to know that God guided him, even through correction. It is a great comfort to know that God will correct us when needed.

C. The Lord as Host.

1. (Psa_23:5) Blessing in the presence of danger.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.

a. You prepare a table before me: Without departing from the previous picture of the valley of the shadow of death, David envisioned the provision and goodness given by the Lord as a host, inviting David to a rich table prepared for him.

i. “Here the second allegory begins. A magnificent banquet is provided by a most liberal and benevolent host; who has

not only the bounty to feed me, but power to protect me; and, though surrounded by enemies, I sit down to this table with confidence, knowing that I shall feast in perfect security.” (Clarke)

ii. David gives a beautiful picture: table suggests bounty; prepare suggests foresight and care; before me suggests the personal connection.

b. In the presence of my enemies: This is a striking phrase. The goodness and care suggested by the prepared table is set right in the midst of the presence of my enemies. The host’s care and concern doesn’t eliminate the presence of my enemies, but enables the experience of God’s goodness and bounty even in their midst.

i. “This is the condition of God’s servant – always conflict, but always a spread table.” (Maclaren)

ii. “When a soldier is in the presence of his enemies, if he eats at all he snatches a hasty meal, and away he hastens to the fight. But observe: ‘Thou preparest a table,’ just as a servant does when she unfolds the damask cloth and displays the ornaments of the feast on an ordinary peaceful occasion. Nothing is hurried, there is no confusion, no disturbance, the enemy is at the door and yet God prepares a table, and the Christian sits down and eats as if everything were in perfect peace.” (Spurgeon)

c. You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over: Despite the dangers about and the presence of enemies, David enjoyed the richness of his host’s goodness. He was refreshed by a head anointed with oil; his cup was over-filled.

i. “Beloved, I will ask you now a question. How would it be with you if God had filled your cup in proportion to your faith? How much would you have had in your cup?” (Spurgeon)

ii. “Those that have this happiness must carry their cup upright, and see that it overflows into their poor brethren’s emptier vessels.” (Trapp)

2. (Psa_23:6) Blessing for the future. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord

Forever.

a. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: The host’s care brought the goodness and mercy of God to David, and he lived in the faithful expectation of it continuing all the days of his life.

i. “Mercy is the covenant-word rendered ‘steadfast love’ elsewhere...Together with goodness it suggests the steady kindness and support that one can count on in the family or between firm friends.” (Kidner)

ii. “We are well escorted, with a Shepherd in front and these twin angels behind!” (Meyer)

iii. “These twin guardian angels will always be with me at my back and my beck. Just as when great princes go abroad they must not go unattended, so it is with the believer.” (Spurgeon)

b. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever: The Psalm ends with the calmest assurance that he would enjoy the

presence of the Lord forever – both in his days on this earth and beyond.

i. “In the Old Testament world, to eat and drink at someone’s table created a bond of mutual loyalty, and could be the culminated token of a covenant...So to be God’s guest is to be more than a acquaintance, invited for a day. It is to live with Him.” (Kidner)

ii. “While I am here I will be a child at home with my God; the whole world shall be his house to me; and when I ascend into the upper chamber I shall not change my company, nor even change the house; I shall only go to dwell in the upper storey of the house of the Lord for ever.” (Spurgeon)

(Psa 23:2) He takes me to lush pastures, he leads me to refreshing water.

(Psa 23:3) He restores my strength.
He leads me down the right paths
for the sake of his reputation.

(Psa 23:4) Even when I must walk through the darkest valley, I fear no danger,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff reassure me.¹

(Psa 23:5) You prepare a feast before me² in plain sight of my enemies.
You refresh³ my head with oil;
my cup is completely full.⁴

(Psa 23:6) Surely your goodness and faithfulness⁵ will pursue⁶ me all my days,⁷ and I will live in⁸ the LORD’s house⁹ for the rest of my life.¹⁰

(Psa 24:1) Psalm 24¹

A psalm of David.

The LORD owns the earth and all it contains, the world and all who live in it.

(Guzik)

Psa 24:1-10

Psalm 24 – The Great and Sovereign God

This Psalm is simply titled, A Psalm of David. Many think this Psalm was written upon the occasion of the entrance of the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem during the reign of David (2 Samuel 6). Yet Spurgeon correctly wrote, “The eye of the Psalmist looked, however, beyond the typical upgoing of the ark to the sublime ascension of the King of glory.”

A. The great and sovereign God.

1. (Psa_24:1) The declaration: The whole world belongs to the Lord God.

The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness,

The world and those who dwell therein.

a. The earth is the Lord's: David was a noble, successful king – but of a relatively small and insignificant kingdom. One might easily think that the gods of the Egyptians or Assyrians were greater because those kingdoms were greater. Yet David rightly knew that the Lord, Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel was God of all the earth.

b. The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness: It wasn't enough for David to say that the entire

earth belonged to the Lord; he added that all its fullness also belonged to Him. It's difficult to think of a more sweeping statement of God's ownership.

i. "The 'fulness' of the earth may mean its harvests, its wealth, its life, or its worship; in all these senses the Most High God is Possessor of all. The earth is full of God; he made it full and he keeps it full." (Spurgeon)

ii. There is a sense in which the "world" belongs to Satan. Satan is called the god of this age (2Co_4:4), and when he tempted Jesus with the promise of giving Him the kingdoms of this world, Jesus did not question the devil's ability to do so. Yet Satan can only do anything at God's allowance, so God's ultimate ownership is true.

iii. Paul quoted this line twice (1Co_10:26; 1Co_10:28) to establish the principle that no food is in itself unclean, and that there is in fact nothing that actually belongs to the false gods the pagans made offerings unto.

c. The world and those who dwell therein: God's ownership of the earth extends to the people who live upon it. Through the rights of creation and continuing provision, God has a claim upon every person who has ever lived.

2. (Psa_24:2) The reason: God as creator. For He has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the waters.

a. For He has founded it upon the seas: God has right to the earth and all who dwell upon it

because He created both it and them. Specifically, David looks back to the creation account of Genesis 1 and remembers the creation of land in the midst of earth's waters on the third day of creation.

b. And established it upon the waters: To the best of our knowledge, David had never ventured more than a few hundred miles beyond Israel, and had never seen a sea other than the Mediterranean

(perhaps also the Red Sea). David never saw a modern globe or earth projection. Yet he knew that the waters of the earth dominated the globe, so much so that it could be said that the earth is in the midst of the waters instead of the waters in the midst of the earth's land.

i. To David, this may have seemed to be a wonderful engineering marvel – that God could establish the earth upon the waters.

ii. “Upon could be translated ‘above’, as in Psa_8:1.” (Kidner)
B. Received by the great and sovereign God.

1. (Psa_24:3) The question asked – whom does God receive?

Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?

Or who may stand in His holy place?

a. Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? In light of God's sovereign ownership of the earth and all who live upon it, David wondered exactly who had the right to stand before God. This wasn't about mountain climbing or hill ascending ability, but about the right to come before God.

b. Who may stand in His holy place? David here clarified his previous question. David asked, “Who has the right to stand before God at His holy temple, in the holy place?”

i. This is a question that used to concern mankind much more than it does in our present day. There was a time when men and women genuinely wondered what was required to

make them right with God. Today, it seems the most-asked question is something like, “How can I be happy?”

ii. Personal happiness is important; but it isn't more important than being in right relationship with our Creator and Provider. David not only asked an important question, but the most important question.

2. (Psa_24:4) The answer to the question: the moral character of the one whom God receives.

He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully.

a. He who has clean hands a pure heart: This speaks of a man or woman who is pure in both their actions (hands) and intentions (heart). This one can ascend the hill of the Lord and stand in His holy place.

i. David already established that God ruled the earth; now he declared that God rules the earth on a moral foundation. He is concerned with the moral behavior of mankind.

ii. Clean hands are important for good hygiene, but this speaks of much more than washing with water. Pontus Pilate washed his hands, but they were not clean.

iii. “But ‘clean hands’ would not suffice, unless they were connected with ‘a pure heart.’ True religion is heart-work.” (Spurgeon)

b. Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol: The one accepted by God also rejects idolatry, in his actions but especially in his soul.

i. “The meaning of lift up his soul is illuminated by Psa_25:1, where it is parallel to ‘trust’.” (Kidner)

c. Nor sworn deceitfully: The words we speak are a good indication of the state of our heart, the inner man or woman (Mat_12:34). One who makes deceptive promises finds no welcome from God.

i. David understood all this under the general principles of the Old Covenant, where God promised to bless and receive obedient Israel, and also promised to curse and afflict a disobedient Israel (Deuteronomy 27-28).

ii. Outside the terms of the Old Covenant that God made with Israel, these answers of David may cause one to despair. It’s easy to look at this list and see that my hands are not always clean; my heart is not always pure. Idolatry can be both subtle and stubborn in my heart. I also find it too easy to make promises with at least a tinge of deceit.

iii. Fortunately, God established a better covenant, a new covenant through the person and work of Jesus. Under the new covenant we see that Jesus is the one who has clean hands and a pure heart, perfectly so. Jesus has never lifted up his soul to an idol, and has never sworn deceitfully. In His righteousness, given to all who believe (Rom_3:22), we can ascend His holy hill and stand in His holy place.

iv. “Our Lord Jesus Christ could ascend into the hill of the Lord because his hands were clean and his heart was pure, and if we by faith in him are conformed to his image we shall enter too.” (Spurgeon)

v. Nevertheless, David’s principle is also accurate under the New Covenant in this sense: the conduct of one’s life is a

reflection of their fellowship with God. As John wrote: If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth (1Jn_1:6). We might say that under the Old Covenant a righteous walk was the precondition for fellowship with God; under the New Covenant a righteous walk is the result of fellowship with God, founded on faith. Yet under both covenants, God cares very much about the moral conduct of mankind, especially those who identify themselves as His people.

3. (Psa_24:5) The promise of blessing to the righteous man.

He shall receive blessing from the Lord,

And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

a. He shall receive blessing from the Lord: God knows and cares about the moral behavior of men and women. He rewards those who honor Him with their lives.

i. This blessing may be understood sometimes in reward that God grants to the obedient; other times it may be understood as the natural result of living according to God's wise order.

ii. "It is here very observable, that the character of a right and acceptable worshipper of God is not taken from his nation and relation to Abraham, or from all those costly and laborious rites and ceremonies of the law, in which the generality of the Israelites pleased themselves, but in moral and spiritual duties, which most of them grossly neglected." (Poole)

iii. He shall receive blessing: "Perhaps alluding to Obed-edom, at whose house the ark had been lodged, and on whom God had poured out especial blessings." (Clarke)

b. And righteousness from the God of his salvation: David here speaks in the idiom of the Old Covenant, where right standing with God might be assumed from the life of the obedient. At the same time, David wrote of a received righteousness that came from the God of his salvation.

i. We might say that obedient life spoke of in Psa_24:4 is the product of the received righteousness obtained by faith, the righteousness from the God of his salvation.

ii. Even with the important distinctions between the old and new covenants, it is a mistake to say that salvation was by works under the old covenant. One might say that in some sense blessing was by works of obedience, but righteousness was always and is always from the God of his salvation.

iii. Under the old covenant, that faith was often expressed by the trust in the work of sacrifice, looking forward to the ultimate, perfect sacrifice promised by God and fulfilled in the work of Jesus at the cross.

4. (Psa_24:6) A description of the blessed and righteous ones.

This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him,

Who seek Your face.

Selah

a. This is Jacob: This was David's way of identifying God's covenant people. The blessed and righteous ones have entered into covenant with God.

b. The generation of those who seek Him: The blessed and righteous ones do more than enter into covenant with God; they also pursue Him with a continual seeking. This is something each generation must do afresh.

i. "Heaven is a generation of finders, of possessors, of enjoyers, seekers of God. But here we are a generation of seekers." (Sibbes, cited in Spurgeon)

c. Who seek Your face: The idea is intensified by repetition, by description (to seek Your face is even closer than seeking Him), and by the use of a contemplative pause (Selah).

C. Receiving the great King.

1. (Psa_24:7-8) A call to welcome the God who reigns over all the earth.

Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory?

The Lord strong and mighty,

The Lord mighty in battle.

a. Lift up your heads, O you gates! The first section of this Psalm declared the greatness of God. The second section spoke of how man can come into relationship with this great God. Now the third section welcomes God unto His people by the opening of the gates.

i. “When the King of England wishes to enter the city of London, through the Temple Bar, the gate being closed against him, the herald demands entrance. ‘Open the gate.’ From within a voice is heard, ‘Who is there?’ The herald answers, ‘The King of England!’ The gate is at once opened, and the king passes, amidst the joyful acclamations of his people. This is an ancient custom, and the allusion is to it in this Psalm.” (Evans, cited in Spurgeon)

b. And the King of glory shall come in: Assuming that King David wrote this Psalm either for the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem or in commemoration of it, we can also see that “the singer saw in that ceremony the symbol of greater things.” (Morgan)

i. “Ancient rabbinical sources tell us that, in the Jewish liturgy, Psalms 24 was always used in worship on the first day of the week. The first day of the week is our Sunday. So, putting these facts together, we may assume that these were the words being recited by the temple priests at the very time the Lord Jesus Christ mounted a donkey and ascended the rocky approach to Jerusalem.” (Boice)

ii. Therefore we can make several connections to this idea that the King of glory shall come in.

· · This was fulfilled with the ark of the covenant came to Jerusalem (2Sa_6:11-18)

· · This was fulfilled with the ascended Jesus entered into the heaven (Act_1:9-10; Eph_1:20)

· · This is fulfilled when an individual heart opens to Jesus as King

c. And the King of glory shall come in: The idea is plain; it is assumed that when God is welcomed with open gates and doors, He is please to come in. The King of glory will meet with man when approached correctly and the doors are opened unto Him.

i. The idea that the doors or gates might be opened unto God yet He would not come unto man isn't even considered. When we draw near to Him, He draws near to us (Jam_4:8).

ii. "For the Church is Christ's temple; and every faithful soul is a gate thereof to let him in, as Rev_3:20." (Trapp)

iii. In Rev_3:20 this idea is presented as a plea from Jesus unto His people: Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. Jesus promised - open the door, and I will come in.

iv. "Surely, if there were doors and gates that needed to be lifted up before Christ could enter into heaven, much more are there doors and gates that must be opened to receive him into our hearts." (Spurgeon)

v. "We must have the King of Glory within. To have Him without, even though He be on the Throne, will not avail." (Meyer)

c. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty: Perhaps with a touch of amazement, David notes that the same God who responds to man's welcome is still the King of glory; He is mighty in battle. His openness to man doesn't diminish His glory or might.

i. "The expression mighty in battle is but a stronger form of God's title of 'warrior' first heard in the song of victory at the Red Sea (Exo_15:3)." (Kidner)

2. (Psa_24:9-10) Repetition for the sake of emphasis.

Lift up your heads, O you gates!

Lift up, you everlasting doors!

And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory?

The Lord of hosts,

He is the King of glory.

Selah

a. Lift up your heads, O you gates! As is common in Hebrew poetry, repetition communicates emphasis. The ideas of Psa_24:7-8 were important and glorious enough to repeat.

i. ii. When Jesus entered Jerusalem at the Triumphal Entry, Matthew tells us that the city asked, “Who is this?” (Mat_21:10). If they had known who it was, the response should have been, “The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory!”

ii. Lord of hosts: “Under whose command are all the hosts of heaven and earth, angels and men, and all other creatures.” (Poole) “In fact, the conception underlying the name is that of the universe as an ordered whole, a disciplined army, a cosmos obedient to His voice.” (Maclaren)

b. He is the King of glory. Selah: This Psalm rightly ends on a reflective pause. It is no small thing that this King of glory stoops down to receive man and even to be received by men.

i. G. Campbell Morgan connected these three Psalms of David, 22, 23, and 24 in an interesting way. “By our calendars, yesterday He passed through Psalms 22. Today He is exercising the office of Psalms 23. Tomorrow, He will exercise finally the authority of Psalms 24.” (Morgan) (Psa 24:2) For he set its foundation upon the seas, and established² it upon the ocean currents.³

(Psa 24:3) Who is allowed to ascend⁴ the mountain of the LORD?⁵

Who may go up to his holy dwelling place?

(Psa 24:4) The one whose deeds are blameless and whose motives are pure,⁶

who does not lie,⁷
or make promises with no intention of keeping them.⁸

(Psa 24:5) Such godly people are rewarded by the LORD,⁹
and vindicated by the God who delivers them.¹⁰

(Psa 24:6) Such purity characterizes the people who seek his
favor, Jacob's descendants, who pray to him.¹¹ (Selah)

(Psa 24:7) Look up,¹² you gates!
Rise up,¹³ you eternal doors!
Then the majestic king¹⁴ will enter!¹⁵

(Psa 24:8) Who is this majestic king?¹⁶
The LORD who is strong and mighty! The LORD who is
mighty in battle!

(Psa 24:9) Look up, you gates!
Rise up, you eternal doors!
Then the majestic king will enter!

(Psa 24:10) Who is this majestic king?
The LORD who commands armies!¹⁷
He is the majestic king! (Selah)
(Psa 25:1) Psalm 25¹

By David.
O LORD, I come before you in prayer.² (Psa 25:2) My God, I
trust in you.
Please do not let me be humiliated;
do not let my enemies triumphantly rejoice over me!

(Psa 25:3) Certainly none who rely on you will be humiliated.
Those who deal in treachery will be thwarted³ and
humiliated.

(Psa 25:4) Make me understand your ways, O LORD!

Teach me your paths!⁴

(Psa 25:5) Guide me into your truth⁵ and teach me.
For you are the God who delivers me;
on you I rely all day long.

(Psa 25:6) Remember⁶ your compassionate and faithful
deeds, O LORD, for you have always acted in this manner.⁷

(Psa 25:7) Do not hold against me⁸ the sins of my youth⁹ or
my rebellious acts!
Because you are faithful to me, extend to me your favor, O
LORD!¹⁰

(Psa 25:8) The LORD is both kind and fair;¹¹
that is why he teaches sinners the right way to live.¹²

(Psa 25:9) May he show¹³ the humble what is right!¹⁴
May he teach¹⁵ the humble his way!

(Psa 25:10) The LORD always proves faithful and reliable¹⁶
to those who follow the demands of his covenant.¹⁷

(Psa 25:11) For the sake of your reputation,¹⁸ O LORD,
forgive my sin, because it is great.¹⁹

(Psa 25:12) The LORD shows his faithful followers the way
they should live.²⁰

(Psa 25:13) They experience his favor;²¹
their descendants²² inherit the land.²³

(Psa 25:14) The LORD's loyal followers receive his
guidance,²⁴ and he reveals his covenantal demands to
them.²⁵

(Psa 25:15) I continually look to the LORD for help,²⁶ for he will free my feet from the enemy's net.²⁷

(Psa 25:16) Turn toward me and have mercy on me, for I am alone²⁸ and oppressed!

(Psa 25:17) Deliver me from my distress;²⁹ rescue me from my suffering!³⁰

(Psa 25:18) See my pain and suffering!
Forgive all my sins!³¹

(Psa 25:19) Watch my enemies, for they outnumber me; they hate me and want to harm me.³²

(Psa 25:20) Protect me³³ and deliver me!
Please do not let me be humiliated, for I have taken shelter in you!

(Psa 25:21) May integrity and godliness protect me, for I rely on you!

(Psa 25:22) O God, rescue³⁴ Israel from all their distress!³⁵
(Psa 26:1) Psalm 26¹

By David.

Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have integrity,² and I trust in the LORD without wavering.

(Psa 26:2) Examine me, O LORD, and test me!
Evaluate my inner thoughts and motives!³

(Psa 26:3) For I am ever aware of your faithfulness,⁴ and your loyalty continually motivates me.⁵

(Psa 26:4) I do not associate⁶ with deceitful men, or consort⁷ with those who are dishonest.⁸

(Psa 26:5) I hate the mob⁹ of evil men, and do not associate¹⁰ with the wicked.

(Psa 26:6) I maintain a pure lifestyle,¹¹ so I can appear before your altar,¹² O LORD,

(Psa 26:7) to give you thanks,¹³ and to tell about all your amazing deeds.¹⁴

(Psa 26:8) O LORD, I love the temple where you live,¹⁵ the place where your splendor is revealed.¹⁶

(Psa 26:9) Do not sweep me away¹⁷ with sinners, or execute me along with violent people,¹⁸

(Psa 26:10) who are always ready to do wrong¹⁹ or offer a bribe.²⁰

(Psa 26:11) But I have integrity!²¹ Rescue me²² and have mercy on me!

(Psa 26:12) I am safe,²³ and among the worshipers I will praise the LORD.

(Psa 27:1) Psalm 27¹

By David.

The LORD delivers and vindicates me!²

I fear no one!³

The LORD protects my life! I am afraid of no one!⁴

(Psa 27:2) When evil men attack me⁵ to devour my flesh,⁶

when my adversaries and enemies attack me,⁷ they stumble and fall.⁸

(Psa 27:3) Even when an army is deployed against me, I do not fear.⁹

Even when war is imminent,¹⁰

I remain confident.¹¹

(Psa 27:4) I have asked the LORD for one thing — this is what I desire!

I want to live¹² in the LORD's house¹³ all the days of my life, so I can gaze at the splendor¹⁴ of the LORD and contemplate in his temple.

(Psa 27:5) He will surely¹⁵ give me shelter¹⁶ in the day of danger;¹⁷ he will hide me in his home;¹⁸

he will place me¹⁹ on an inaccessible rocky summit.²⁰

(Psa 27:6) Now I will triumph

over my enemies who surround me!²¹

I will offer sacrifices in his dwelling place and shout for joy!²²

I will sing praises to the LORD!

(Psa 27:7) Hear me,²³ O LORD, when I cry out!

Have mercy on me and answer me!

(Psa 27:8) My heart tells me to pray to you,²⁴ and I do pray to you, O LORD.²⁵

(Psa 27:9) Do not reject me!²⁶

Do not push your servant away in anger! You are my deliverer!²⁷

Do not forsake or abandon me,
O God who vindicates me!

(Psa 27:10) Even if my father and mother abandoned me,²⁸
the LORD would take me in.²⁹

(Psa 27:11) Teach me how you want me to live;³⁰
lead me along a level path³¹ because of those who wait to
ambush me!³²

(Psa 27:12) Do not turn me over to my enemies,³³
for false witnesses who want to destroy me testify against
me.³⁴

(Psa 27:13) Where would I be if I did not believe I would
experience the LORD's favor in the land of the living?³⁵

(Psa 27:14) Rely³⁶ on the LORD!
Be strong and confident!³⁷
Rely on the LORD!

(Psa 28:1) Psalm 28¹

By David.

To you, O LORD, I cry out!
My protector,² do not ignore me!³
If you do not respond to me,⁴
I will join⁵ those who are descending into the grave.⁶

(Psa 28:2) Hear my plea for mercy when I cry out to you for
help, when I lift my hands⁷ toward your holy temple!⁸

(Psa 28:3) Do not drag me away with evil men, with those
who behave wickedly,⁹
who talk so friendly to their neighbors,¹⁰ while they plan to
harm them!¹¹

(Psa 28:4) Pay them back for their evil deeds!
Pay them back for what they do! Punish them!¹²

(Psa 28:5) For they do not understand the LORD's actions, or the way he carries out justice.¹³
The LORD¹⁴ will permanently demolish them.¹⁵

(Psa 28:6) The LORD deserves praise,¹⁶
for he has heard my plea for mercy!¹⁷

(Psa 28:7) The LORD strengthens and protects me;¹⁸
I trust in him with all my heart.¹⁹
I am rescued²⁰ and my heart is full of joy;²¹
I will sing to him in gratitude.²²

(Psa 28:8) The LORD strengthens his people;²³ he protects and delivers his chosen king.²⁴

(Psa 28:9) Deliver your people!
Empower²⁵ the nation that belongs to you!²⁶
Care for them like a shepherd and carry them in your arms²⁷ at all times!²⁸
(Psa 29:1) Psalm 29¹

A psalm of David.

Acknowledge the LORD, you heavenly beings,²
acknowledge the LORD's majesty and power!³

(Psa 29:2) Acknowledge the majesty of the LORD's reputation!⁴
Worship the LORD in holy attire!⁵

(Psa 29:3) The LORD's shout is heard over the water;⁶ the majestic God thunders,⁷
the LORD appears over the surging water.⁸

(Psa 29:4) The LORD's shout is powerful,⁹ the LORD's shout is majestic.¹⁰

(Psa 29:5) The LORD's shout breaks¹¹ the cedars,
the LORD shatters¹² the cedars of Lebanon.¹³

(Psa 29:6) He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion¹⁴
like a young ox.¹⁵

(Psa 29:7) The LORD's shout strikes¹⁶ with flaming fire.¹⁷

(Psa 29:8) The LORD's shout shakes¹⁸ the wilderness, the
LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.¹⁹

(Psa 29:9) The LORD's shout bends²⁰ the large trees²¹ and
strips²² the leaves from the forests.²³

Everyone in his temple says, "Majestic!"²⁴

(Psa 29:10) The LORD sits enthroned over the engulfing
waters,²⁵ the LORD sits enthroned²⁶ as the eternal king.

(Psa 29:11) The LORD gives²⁷ his people strength;²⁸ the
LORD grants his people security.²⁹

(Psa 30:1) Psalm 30¹

A psalm — a song used at the dedication of the temple;² by
David.

I will praise you, O LORD, for you lifted me up,³ and did not
allow my enemies to gloat⁴ over me.

(Psa 30:2) O LORD my God,
I cried out to you and you healed me.⁵

(Psa 30:3) O LORD, you pulled me⁶ up from Sheol;
you rescued me from among those descending into the
grave.⁷

(Psa 30:4) Sing to the LORD, you faithful followers⁸ of his;
give thanks to his holy name.⁹

(Psa 30:5) For his anger lasts only a brief moment, and his good favor restores one's life.¹⁰

One may experience sorrow during the night,
but joy arrives in the morning.¹¹

(Psa 30:6) In my self-confidence I said, "I will never be upended."¹²

(Psa 30:7) O LORD, in your good favor you made me secure.¹³

Then you rejected me¹⁴ and I was terrified.

(Psa 30:8) To you, O LORD, I cried out; I begged the Lord for mercy:¹⁵

(Psa 30:9) "What¹⁶ profit is there in taking my life,¹⁷ in my descending into the Pit?¹⁸

Can the dust of the grave¹⁹ praise you? Can it declare your loyalty?²⁰

(Psa 30:10) Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me!
O LORD, deliver me!"²¹

(Psa 30:11) Then you turned my lament into dancing;
you removed my sackcloth and covered me with joy.²²

(Psa 30:12) So now²³ my heart²⁴ will sing to you and not be silent; O LORD my God, I will always²⁵ give thanks to you.

(Psa 31:1) Psalm 31

For the music director; a psalm of David.

In you, O LORD, I have taken shelter! Never let me be humiliated!

Vindicate me by rescuing me!²

(Psa 31:2) Listen to me!³

Quickly deliver me!

Be my protector and refuge,⁴
a stronghold where I can be safe!⁵

(Psa 31:3) For you are my high ridge⁶ and my stronghold;
for the sake of your own reputation⁷ you lead me and guide
me.⁸

(Psa 31:4) You will free me⁹ from the net they hid for me, for
you are my place of refuge.

(Psa 31:5) Into your hand I entrust my life;¹⁰
you will rescue¹¹ me, O LORD, the faithful God.

(Psa 31:6) I hate those who serve worthless idols,¹² but I
trust in the LORD.

(Psa 31:7) I will be happy and rejoice in your faithfulness,
because you notice my pain and you are aware of how
distressed I am.¹³

(Psa 31:8) You do not deliver me over to the power of the
enemy; you enable me to stand¹⁴ in a wide open place.

(Psa 31:9) Have mercy on me, for I am in distress!
My eyes grow dim¹⁵ from suffering.¹⁶
I have lost my strength.¹⁷

(Psa 31:10) For my life nears its end in pain;
my years draw to a close as I groan.¹⁸
My strength fails me because of¹⁹ my sin, and my bones
become brittle.²⁰

(Psa 31:11) Because of all my enemies, people disdain me;²¹ my neighbors are appalled by my suffering²² — those who know me are horrified by my condition;²³ those who see me in the street run away from me.

(Psa 31:12) I am forgotten, like a dead man no one thinks about;²⁴
I am regarded as worthless, like a broken jar.²⁵

(Psa 31:13) For I hear what so many are saying,²⁶
the terrifying news that comes from every direction.²⁷
When they plot together against me,
they figure out how they can take my life. (Psa 31:14) But I trust in you, O LORD!
I declare, “You are my God!”

(Psa 31:15) You determine my destiny!²⁸
Rescue me from the power of my enemies and those who chase me.

(Psa 31:16) Smile²⁹ on your servant!
Deliver me because of your faithfulness!

(Psa 31:17) O LORD, do not let me be humiliated, for I call out to you!
May evil men be humiliated!
May they go wailing to the grave!³⁰

(Psa 31:18) May lying lips be silenced —
lips³¹ that speak defiantly against the innocent³² with arrogance and contempt!

(Psa 31:19) How great is your favor,³³
which you store up for your loyal followers!³⁴
In plain sight of everyone you bestow it on those who take shelter³⁵ in you.³⁶

(Psa 31:20) You hide them with you, where they are safe from the attacks³⁷ of men;³⁸ you conceal them in a shelter, where they are safe from slanderous attacks.³⁹

(Psa 31:21) The LORD deserves praise⁴⁰ for he demonstrated his amazing faithfulness to me when I was besieged by enemies.⁴¹

(Psa 31:22) I jumped to conclusions and said,⁴² “I am cut off from your presence!”⁴³
But you heard my plea for mercy when I cried out to you for help.

(Psa 31:23) Love the LORD, all you faithful followers⁴⁴ of his!

The LORD protects those who have integrity,
but he pays back in full the one who acts arrogantly.⁴⁵

(Psa 31:24) Be strong and confident,⁴⁶ all you who wait on the LORD!

(Psa 32:1) Psalm 32¹

By David; a well-written song.²

How blessed³ is the one whose rebellious acts are forgiven,⁴ whose sin is pardoned!⁵

(Psa 32:2) How blessed is the one⁶ whose wrongdoing the LORD does not punish,⁷ in whose spirit there is no deceit.⁸

(Psa 32:3) When I refused to confess my sin,⁹ my whole body wasted away,¹⁰
while I groaned in pain all day long.

(Psa 32:4) For day and night you tormented me;¹¹

you tried to destroy me¹² in the intense heat¹³ of summer.¹⁴ (Selah)

(Psa 32:5) Then I confessed my sin;

I no longer covered up my wrongdoing.

I said, "I will confess¹⁵ my rebellious acts to the LORD." And then you forgave my sins.¹⁶ (Selah)

(Psa 32:6) For this reason every one of your faithful followers¹⁷ should pray to you while there is a window of opportunity.¹⁸

Certainly¹⁹ when the surging water²⁰ rises, it will not reach them.²¹

(Psa 32:7) You are my hiding place;

you protect me from distress.

You surround me with shouts of joy from those celebrating deliverance.²² (Selah)

(Psa 32:8) I will instruct and teach you²³ about how you should live.²⁴

I will advise you as I look you in the eye.²⁵

(Psa 32:9) Do not be²⁶ like an unintelligent horse or mule,²⁷ which will not obey you unless they are controlled by a bridle and bit.²⁸

(Psa 32:10) An evil person suffers much pain,²⁹

but the LORD's faithfulness overwhelms the one who trusts in him.³⁰

(Psa 32:11) Rejoice in the LORD and be happy, you who are godly!

Shout for joy, all you who are morally upright!³¹

(Psa 33:1) Psalm 33

You godly ones, shout for joy because of the LORD!

It is appropriate for the morally upright to offer him praise.

(Psa 33:2) Give thanks to the LORD with the harp!
Sing to him to the accompaniment of a ten-stringed instrument!

(Psa 33:3) Sing to him a new song!²
Play skillfully as you shout out your praises to him!³

(Psa 33:4) For⁴ the LORD's decrees⁵ are just,⁶ and everything he does is fair.⁷

(Psa 33:5) The LORD promotes⁸ equity and justice;
the LORD's faithfulness extends throughout the earth.⁹

(Psa 33:6) By the LORD's decree¹⁰ the heavens were made;
by a mere word from his mouth all the stars in the sky were created.¹¹

(Psa 33:7) He piles up the water of the sea;¹² he puts the oceans¹³ in storehouses.

(Psa 33:8) Let the whole earth fear¹⁴ the LORD!
Let all who live in the world stand in awe of him!

(Psa 33:9) For he spoke, and it¹⁵ came into existence, he issued the decree,¹⁶ and it stood firm.

(Psa 33:10) The LORD frustrates¹⁷ the decisions of the nations; he nullifies the plans¹⁸ of the peoples.

(Psa 33:11) The LORD's decisions stand forever;
his plans abide throughout the ages.¹⁹

(Psa 33:12) How blessed²⁰ is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen to be his special possession.²¹

(Psa 33:13) The LORD watches²² from heaven;
he sees all people.²³

(Psa 33:14) From the place where he lives he looks carefully
at all the earth's inhabitants.

(Psa 33:15) He is the one who forms every human heart,²⁴
and takes note of all their actions.

(Psa 33:16) No king is delivered by his vast army;
a warrior is not saved by his great might.

(Psa 33:17) A horse disappoints those who trust in it for
victory;²⁵ despite its great strength, it cannot deliver.

(Psa 33:18) Look, the LORD takes notice of his loyal
followers,²⁶ those who wait for him to demonstrate his
faithfulness²⁷

(Psa 33:19) by saving their lives from death²⁸
and sustaining them during times of famine.²⁹

(Psa 33:20) We³⁰ wait for the LORD;
he is our deliverer³¹ and shield.³²

(Psa 33:21) For our hearts rejoice in him, for we trust in his
holy name.

(Psa 33:22) May we experience your faithfulness, O LORD,³³
for³⁴ we wait for you.

(Psa 34:1) Psalm 34¹

Written by David, when he pretended to be insane before
Abimelech, causing the king to send him away.²

I will praise³ the LORD at all times;
my mouth will continually praise him.⁴

(Psa 34:2) I will boast⁵ in the LORD;
let the oppressed hear and rejoice!⁶

(Psa 34:3) Magnify the LORD with me!
Let's praise⁷ his name together!

(Psa 34:4) I sought the LORD's help⁸ and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.

(Psa 34:5) Those who look to him for help are happy;
their faces are not ashamed.⁹

(Psa 34:6) This oppressed man cried out and the LORD
heard; he saved him¹⁰ from all his troubles.

(Psa 34:7) The LORD's angel camps around
the LORD's¹¹ loyal followers¹² and delivers them.¹³

(Psa 34:8) Taste¹⁴ and see that the LORD is good!
How blessed¹⁵ is the one¹⁶ who takes shelter in him!¹⁷

(Psa 34:9) Remain loyal to¹⁸ the LORD, you chosen people
of his,¹⁹ for his loyal followers²⁰ lack nothing!

(Psa 34:10) Even young lions sometimes lack food and are
hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

(Psa 34:11) Come children! Listen to me!
I will teach you what it means to fear the LORD.²¹

(Psa 34:12) Do you want to really live?²²
Would you love to live a long, happy life?²³

(Psa 34:13) Then make sure you don't speak evil words²⁴ or
use deceptive speech!²⁵

(Psa 34:14) Turn away from evil and do what is right!²⁶
Strive for peace and promote it!²⁷

(Psa 34:15) The LORD pays attention to the godly and hears
their cry for help.²⁸

(Psa 34:16) But the LORD opposes evildoers
and wipes out all memory of them from the earth.²⁹ (Psa
34:17) The godly³⁰ cry out and the LORD hears; he saves
them from all their troubles.³¹

(Psa 34:18) The LORD is near the brokenhearted;
he delivers³² those who are discouraged.³³

(Psa 34:19) The godly³⁴ face many dangers,³⁵
but the LORD saves³⁶ them³⁷ from each one of them.

(Psa 34:20) He protects³⁸ all his bones;³⁹ not one of them
is broken.⁴⁰

(Psa 34:21) Evil people self-destruct;⁴¹
those who hate the godly are punished.⁴²

(Psa 34:22) The LORD rescues his servants;⁴³
all who take shelter in him escape punishment.⁴⁴

(Psa 35:1) Psalm 35¹

By David.

O LORD, fight² those who fight with me! Attack those who
attack me!

(Psa 35:2) Grab your small shield and large shield,³ and rise
up to help me!

(Psa 35:3) Use your spear and lance⁴ against⁵ those who chase me!

Assure me with these words:⁶ “I am your deliverer!”

(Psa 35:4) May those who seek my life be embarrassed and humiliated!

May those who plan to harm me be turned back and ashamed!⁷

(Psa 35:5) May they be⁸ like wind-driven chaff, as the LORD’s angel⁹ attacks them!¹⁰

(Psa 35:6) May their path be¹¹ dark and slippery, as the LORD’s angel chases them!

(Psa 35:7) I did not harm them, but they hid a net to catch me and dug a pit to trap me.¹²

(Psa 35:8) Let destruction take them by surprise!¹³

Let the net they hid catch them! Let them fall into destruction!¹⁴

(Psa 35:9) Then I will rejoice in the LORD and be happy because of his deliverance.¹⁵

(Psa 35:10) With all my strength I will say,¹⁶ “O LORD, who can compare to you?

You rescue¹⁷ the oppressed from those who try to overpower them;¹⁸ the oppressed and needy from those who try to rob them.”¹⁹

(Psa 35:11) Violent men perjure themselves,²⁰ and falsely accuse me.²¹

(Psa 35:12) They repay me evil for the good I have done;²² I am overwhelmed with sorrow.²³

(Psa 35:13) When they were sick, I wore sackcloth,²⁴ and refrained from eating food.²⁵
(If I am lying, may my prayers go unanswered!)²⁶

(Psa 35:14) I mourned for them as I would for a friend or my brother.²⁷
I bowed down²⁸ in sorrow as if I were mourning for my mother.²⁹

(Psa 35:15) But when I stumbled, they rejoiced and gathered together; they gathered together to ambush me.³⁰
They tore at me without stopping to rest.³¹
(Psa 35:16) When I tripped, they taunted me relentlessly,³² and tried to bite me.³³

(Psa 35:17) O Lord, how long are you going to just stand there and watch this?³⁴
Rescue³⁵ me³⁶ from their destructive attacks;
guard my life³⁷ from the young lions!

(Psa 35:18) Then I will give you thanks in the great assembly;³⁸
I will praise you before a large crowd of people!³⁹

(Psa 35:19) Do not let those who are my enemies for no reason⁴⁰ gloat⁴¹ over me!
Do not let those who hate me without cause carry out their wicked schemes!⁴²

(Psa 35:20) For they do not try to make peace with others,⁴³ but plan ways to deceive those who are unsuspecting.⁴⁴

(Psa 35:21) They are ready to devour me;⁴⁵ they say, "Aha! Aha! We've got you!"⁴⁶

(Psa 35:22) But you take notice,⁴⁷ LORD!
O Lord, do not remain far away from me!

(Psa 35:23) Rouse yourself, wake up⁴⁸ and vindicate me!⁴⁹
My God and Lord, defend my just cause!⁵⁰

(Psa 35:24) Vindicate me by your justice, O LORD my God!
Do not let them gloat⁵¹ over me!

(Psa 35:25) Do not let them say to themselves,⁵² "Aha! We
have what we wanted!"⁵³
Do not let them say, "We have devoured him!"

(Psa 35:26) May those who want to harm me be totally
embarrassed and ashamed!⁵⁴
May those who arrogantly taunt me be covered with shame
and humiliation!⁵⁵

(Psa 35:27) May those who desire my vindication shout for
joy and rejoice!
May they continually say,⁵⁶ "May the LORD be praised,⁵⁷
for he wants his servant to be secure."⁵⁸

(Psa 35:28) Then I will tell others about your justice,⁵⁹ and
praise you all day long.⁶⁰
(Psa 36:1) Psalm 36¹

For the music director; written by the LORD's servant, David;
an oracle.²

An evil man is rebellious to the core.³
He does not fear God,⁴

(Psa 36:2) for he is too proud
to recognize and give up his sin.⁵

(Psa 36:3) The words he speaks are sinful and deceitful; he does not care about doing what is wise and right.⁶

(Psa 36:4) He plans ways to sin while he lies in bed; he is committed to a sinful lifestyle;⁷ he does not reject what is evil.⁸

(Psa 36:5) O LORD, your loyal love reaches to the sky;⁹ your faithfulness to the clouds.¹⁰

(Psa 36:6) Your justice is like the highest mountains,¹¹ your fairness like the deepest sea; you preserve¹² mankind and the animal kingdom.¹³

(Psa 36:7) How precious¹⁴ is your loyal love, O God! The human race finds shelter under your wings.¹⁵

(Psa 36:8) They are filled with food from your house, and you allow them to drink from the river of your delicacies.

(Psa 36:9) For you are the one who gives and sustains life.¹⁶

(Psa 36:10) Extend¹⁷ your loyal love to your faithful followers,¹⁸ and vindicate¹⁹ the morally upright!²⁰

(Psa 36:11) Do not let arrogant men overtake me, or let evil men make me homeless!²¹

(Psa 36:12) I can see the evildoers! They have fallen!²² They have been knocked down and are unable to get up!²³

(Psa 37:1) Psalm 37

By David.

Do not fret² when wicked men seem to succeed!³
Do not envy evildoers!

(Psa 37:2) For they will quickly dry up like grass, and wither away like plants.⁴

(Psa 37:3) Trust in the LORD and do what is right!
Settle in the land and maintain your integrity!⁵

(Psa 37:4) Then you will take delight in the LORD,⁶ and he will answer your prayers.⁷

(Psa 37:5) Commit your future to the LORD!⁸
Trust in him, and he will act on your behalf.⁹

(Psa 37:6) He will vindicate you in broad daylight, and publicly defend your just cause.¹⁰

(Psa 37:7) Wait patiently for the LORD!¹¹
Wait confidently¹² for him!
Do not fret over the apparent success of a sinner,¹³ a man who carries out wicked schemes!

(Psa 37:8) Do not be angry and frustrated!¹⁴
Do not fret! That only leads to trouble!

(Psa 37:9) Wicked men¹⁵ will be wiped out,¹⁶
but those who rely on the LORD are the ones who will possess the land.¹⁷

(Psa 37:10) Evil men will soon disappear;¹⁸
you will stare at the spot where they once were, but they will be gone.¹⁹

(Psa 37:11) But the oppressed will possess the land and enjoy great prosperity.²⁰

(Psa 37:12) Evil men plot against the godly²¹ and viciously attack them.²²

(Psa 37:13) The Lord laughs in disgust²³ at them, for he knows that their day is coming.²⁴

(Psa 37:14) Evil men draw their swords and prepare their bows, to bring down²⁵ the oppressed and needy, and to slaughter those who are godly.²⁶

(Psa 37:15) Their swords will pierce²⁷ their own hearts, and their bows will be broken.

(Psa 37:16) The little bit that a godly man owns is better than the wealth of many evil men,²⁸

(Psa 37:17) for evil men will lose their power,²⁹ but the LORD sustains³⁰ the godly.

(Psa 37:18) The LORD watches over the innocent day by day³¹ and they possess a permanent inheritance.³²

(Psa 37:19) They will not be ashamed when hard times come;³³ when famine comes they will have enough to eat.³⁴

(Psa 37:20) But³⁵ evil men will die; the LORD's enemies will be incinerated³⁶ — they will go up in smoke.³⁷

(Psa 37:21) Evil men borrow, but do not repay their debt, but the godly show compassion and are generous.³⁸

(Psa 37:22) Surely³⁹ those favored by the LORD⁴⁰ will possess the land, but those rejected⁴¹ by him will be wiped out.⁴²

(Psa 37:23) The LORD grants success to the one whose behavior he finds commendable.⁴³

(Psa 37:24) Even if⁴⁴ he trips, he will not fall headlong,⁴⁵ for the LORD holds⁴⁶ his hand.

(Psa 37:25) I was once young, now I am old.
I have never seen a godly man abandoned,
or his children⁴⁷ forced to search for food.⁴⁸

(Psa 37:26) All day long he shows compassion and lends to others,⁴⁹ and his children⁵⁰ are blessed.

(Psa 37:27) Turn away from evil! Do what is right!⁵¹
Then you will enjoy lasting security.⁵²

(Psa 37:28) For the LORD promotes⁵³ justice,
and never abandons⁵⁴ his faithful followers. They are
permanently secure,⁵⁵
but the children⁵⁶ of evil men are wiped out.⁵⁷

(Psa 37:29) The godly will possess the land and will dwell in it permanently.

(Psa 37:30) The godly speak wise words and promote justice.⁵⁸

(Psa 37:31) The law of their God controls their thinking;⁵⁹
their⁶⁰ feet do not slip.

(Psa 37:32) Evil men set an ambush for the godly and try to kill them.⁶¹

(Psa 37:33) But the LORD does not surrender the godly, or allow them to be condemned in a court of law.⁶²

(Psa 37:34) Rely⁶³ on the LORD! Obey his commands!⁶⁴
Then he will permit you⁶⁵ to possess the land;
you will see the demise of evil men.⁶⁶

(Psa 37:35) I have seen ruthless evil men⁶⁷
growing in influence, like a green tree grows in its native
soil.⁶⁸

(Psa 37:36) But then one passes by, and suddenly they have
disappeared!⁶⁹
I looked for them, but they could not be found.

(Psa 37:37) Take note of the one who has integrity! Observe
the godly!⁷⁰
For the one who promotes peace has a future.⁷¹

(Psa 37:38) Sinful rebels are totally destroyed;⁷² evil men
have no future.⁷³

(Psa 37:39) But the LORD delivers the godly;⁷⁴ he protects
them in times of trouble.⁷⁵

(Psa 37:40) The LORD helps them and rescues them;
he rescues them from evil men and delivers them,⁷⁶ for
they seek his protection.

(Psa 38:1) Psalm 38¹

A psalm of David, written to get God's attention.²

O LORD, do not continue to rebuke me in your anger! Do not
continue to punish me in your raging fury!³

(Psa 38:2) For your arrows pierce⁴ me, and your hand
presses me down.⁵

(Psa 38:3) My whole body is sick because of your judgment;⁶
I am deprived of health because of my sin.⁷

(Psa 38:4) For my sins overwhelm me;⁸
like a heavy load, they are too much for me to bear.

(Psa 38:5) My wounds⁹ are infected and starting to smell,¹⁰
because of my foolish sins.¹¹

(Psa 38:6) I am dazed¹² and completely humiliated;¹³ all day long I walk around mourning.

(Psa 38:7) For I am overcome with shame¹⁴ and my whole body is sick.¹⁵

(Psa 38:8) I am numb with pain and severely battered;¹⁶
I groan loudly because of the anxiety I feel.¹⁷

(Psa 38:9) O Lord, you understand my heart's desire;¹⁸ my groaning is not hidden from you.

(Psa 38:10) My heart beats quickly;
my strength leaves me; I can hardly see.¹⁹

(Psa 38:11) Because of my condition,²⁰ even my friends and acquaintances keep their distance;²¹ my neighbors stand far away.²²

(Psa 38:12) Those who seek my life try to entrap me;²³ those who want to harm me speak destructive words; all day long they say deceitful things.

(Psa 38:13) But I am like a deaf man — I hear nothing; I am like a mute who cannot speak.²⁴

(Psa 38:14) I am like a man who cannot hear
and is incapable of arguing his defense.²⁵

(Psa 38:15) Yet²⁶ I wait for you, O LORD!
You will respond, O Lord, my God!

(Psa 38:16) I have prayed for deliverance, because
otherwise they will gloat over me;²⁷ when my foot slips they
will arrogantly taunt me.²⁸

(Psa 38:17) For I am about to stumble,
and I am in constant pain.²⁹

(Psa 38:18) Yes,³⁰ I confess my wrongdoing, and I am
concerned about my sins.

(Psa 38:19) But those who are my enemies for no reason are
numerous;³¹ those who hate me without cause outnumber
me.³²

(Psa 38:20) They repay me evil for the good I have done;
though I have tried to do good to them, they hurl
accusations at me.³³

(Psa 38:21) Do not abandon me, O LORD!
My God, do not remain far away from me!

(Psa 38:22) Hurry and help me,³⁴ O Lord, my deliverer!
(Psa 39:1) Psalm 39¹

For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of David.

I decided,² "I will watch what I say
and make sure I do not sin with my tongue.³
I will put a muzzle over my mouth while in the presence of
an evil man."⁴

(Psa 39:2) I was stone silent;5
I held back the urge to speak.6
My frustration grew;7

(Psa 39:3) my anxiety intensified.8
As I thought about it, I became impatient.9
Finally I spoke these words:10

(Psa 39:4) "O LORD, help me understand my mortality and
the brevity of life!11
Let me realize how quickly my life will pass!12

(Psa 39:5) Look, you make my days short-lived,13
and my life span is nothing from your perspective.14
Surely all people, even those who seem secure, are nothing
but vapor.15

(Psa 39:6) Surely people go through life as mere ghosts.16

Surely they accumulate worthless wealth
without knowing who will eventually haul it away.”¹⁷

(Psa 39:7) But now, O Lord, upon what am I relying?
You are my only hope!¹⁸

(Psa 39:8) Deliver me from all my sins of rebellion!
Do not make me the object of fools’ insults!

(Psa 39:9) I am silent and cannot open my mouth because of
what you have done.¹⁹

(Psa 39:10) Please stop wounding me!²⁰
You have almost beaten me to death!²¹

(Psa 39:11) You severely discipline people for their sins;²²
like a moth you slowly devour their strength.²³
Surely all people are a mere vapor. (Selah)

(Psa 39:12) Hear my prayer, O LORD!
Listen to my cry for help!
Do not ignore my sobbing!²⁴
For I am dependent on you, like one residing outside his
native land; I am at your mercy, just as all my ancestors
were.²⁵

(Psa 39:13) Turn your angry gaze away from me, so I can be
happy before I pass away.²⁶

(Psa 40:1) Psalm 40¹

For the music director; By David, a psalm.

I relied completely² on the LORD, and he turned toward me
and heard my cry for help.

(Psa 40:2) He lifted me out of the watery pit,³ out of the slimy mud.⁴

He placed my feet on a rock
and gave me secure footing.⁵

(Psa 40:3) He gave me reason to sing a new song,⁶ praising our God.⁷

May many see what God has done,
so that they might swear allegiance to him and trust in the LORD!⁸

(Psa 40:4) How blessed⁹ is the one¹⁰ who trusts in the LORD¹¹ and does not seek help from¹² the proud or from liars!¹³

(Psa 40:5) O LORD, my God, you have accomplished many things;

you have done amazing things and carried out your purposes for us.¹⁴

No one can thwart you!¹⁵

I want to declare them and talk about them, but they are too numerous to recount!¹⁶

(Psa 40:6) Receiving sacrifices and offerings are not your primary concern.¹⁷

You make that quite clear to me!¹⁸

You do not ask for burnt sacrifices and sin offerings.

(Psa 40:7) Then I say, "Look! I come!

What is written in the scroll pertains to me.¹⁹

(Psa 40:8) I want to do what pleases you,²⁰ my God.

Your law dominates my thoughts."²¹

(Psa 40:9) I have told the great assembly²² about your justice.²³

Look! I spare no words!²⁴
O LORD, you know this is true.

(Psa 40:10) I have not failed to tell about your justice;²⁵
I spoke about your reliability and deliverance;
I have not neglected to tell the great assembly about your
loyal love and faithfulness.²⁶

(Psa 40:11) O LORD, you do not withhold²⁷ your
compassion from me.
May your loyal love and faithfulness continually protect
me!²⁸

(Psa 40:12) For innumerable dangers²⁹ surround me.
My sins overtake me so I am unable to see;
they outnumber the hairs of my head so my strength fails
me.³⁰

(Psa 40:13) Please be willing, O LORD, to rescue me!
O LORD, hurry and help me!³¹

(Psa 40:14) May those who are trying to snatch away my life
be totally embarrassed and ashamed!³²
May those who want to harm me
be turned back and ashamed!³³

(Psa 40:15) May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!" be
humiliated³⁴ and disgraced!³⁵

(Psa 40:16) May all those who seek you be happy and
rejoice in you!
May those who love to experience³⁶ your deliverance say
continually,³⁷ "May the LORD be praised!"³⁸

(Psa 40:17) I am oppressed and needy!³⁹
May the Lord pay attention to me!⁴⁰

You are my helper and my deliverer! O my God, do not delay!

(Psa 41:1) Psalm 41

For the music director; a psalm of David.

How blessed² is the one who treats the poor properly!³
When trouble comes,⁴ the LORD delivers him.⁵

(Psa 41:2) May the LORD protect him and save his life!⁶
May he be blessed⁷ in the land!
Do not turn him over⁸ to his enemies!⁹

(Psa 41:3) The LORD supports¹⁰ him on his sickbed;
you completely heal him from his illness.¹¹

(Psa 41:4) As for me, I said:¹²
“O LORD, have mercy on me!
Heal me, for I have sinned against you!

(Psa 41:5) My enemies ask this cruel question about me,¹³
‘When will he finally die and be forgotten?’¹⁴

(Psa 41:6) When someone comes to visit,¹⁵ he pretends to
be friendly;¹⁶ he thinks of ways to defame me,¹⁷
and when he leaves he slanders me.¹⁸

(Psa 41:7) All who hate me whisper insults about me to one
another;¹⁹ they plan ways to harm me.

(Psa 41:8) They say,²⁰
‘An awful disease²¹ overwhelms him,²²
and now that he is bed-ridden he will never recover.’²³

(Psa 41:9) Even my close friend²⁴ whom I trusted,
he who shared meals with me, has turned against me.²⁵

(Psa 41:10) As for you, O LORD, have mercy on me and raise me up, so I can pay them back!“²⁶

(Psa 41:11) By this²⁷ I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does²⁸ not triumph²⁹ over me.

(Psa 41:12) As for me, you uphold³⁰ me because of my integrity;³¹ you allow³² me permanent access to your presence.³³

(Psa 41:13) The LORD God of Israel deserves praise³⁴ in the future and forevermore!³⁵

We agree! We agree!³⁶

(Psa 42:1) Book 2 (Psalms 42 — 72)

Psalm 42¹

For the music director; a well-written song² by the Korahites.

As a deer³ longs⁴ for streams of water, so I long⁵ for you, O God!

(Psa 42:2) I thirst⁶ for God, for the living God.
I say,⁷ “When will I be able to go and appear in God’s presence?”⁸

(Psa 42:3) I cannot eat, I weep day and night;⁹
all day long they say to me,¹⁰ “Where is your God?”

(Psa 42:4) I will remember and weep!¹¹
For I was once walking along with the great throng to the temple of God,
shouting and giving thanks along with the crowd as we celebrated the holy festival.¹²

(Psa 42:5) Why are you depressed,¹³ O my soul?¹⁴
Why are you upset?¹⁵
Wait for God!
For I will again give thanks
to my God for his saving intervention.¹⁶

(Psa 42:6) I am depressed,¹⁷
so I will pray to you while I am trapped here in the region of
the upper Jordan,¹⁸ from Hermon,¹⁹ from Mount Mizar.²⁰

(Psa 42:7) One deep stream calls out to another²¹ at the
sound of your waterfalls;²² all your billows and waves
overwhelm me.²³

(Psa 42:8) By day the LORD decrees his loyal love,²⁴ and by
night he gives me a song,²⁵
a prayer²⁶ to the living God.

(Psa 42:9) I will pray²⁷ to God, my high ridge:²⁸ “Why do
you ignore²⁹ me?
Why must I walk around mourning³⁰ because my enemies
oppress me?”

(Psa 42:10) My enemies’ taunts cut into me to the bone,³¹
as they say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”³²

(Psa 42:11) Why are you depressed,³³ O my soul?³⁴
Why are you upset?³⁵
Wait for God!
For I will again give thanks
to my God for his saving intervention.³⁶
(Psa 43:1) Psalm 43¹

Vindicate me, O God!
Fight for me² against an ungodly nation! Deliver me³ from
deceitful and evil men!⁴

(Guzik)
Psa 43:1-5

Psalms 43 - From Depression to a Procession of Praise

“This psalm is either a part of the previous one or is closely connected with it.” (Morgan) In fact, in a number of ancient Hebrew manuscripts Psalms 42 and Psalms 43 are joined together as one unity. They are probably separate psalms, linked by a common problem: spiritual depression.

A. The Psalmist cries out to God.

1. (Psa_43:1) God, where are You when the wicked surround me? Vindicate me, O God, And plead my cause against an ungodly nation;

Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!

a. Vindicate me, O God: The psalmist repeats a familiar theme in the Psalms - a cry for vindication. He feels unjustly accused and takes that sense of injustice to the right place - to the throne of God, and he leaves his vindication up to the Lord.

b. Deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man! It's hard to deal with deceitful and unjust people, because they not only do wrong but they also know how to cover it up with deceit. In such a tough situation, the psalmist does the right thing - he cries out to God.

2. (Psa_43:2) God, why do You seem so distant from me? For You are the God of my strength; Why do You cast me off?

Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

a. For You are the God of my strength: If the psalmist didn't have a relationship with God, he wouldn't have this problem. Yet he does love the Lord, and his trust is the strength of God and not his own strength - so he wonders where God is at this critical moment of need.

b. Why do You cast me off? Why do I go mourning: Anyone who loves God and walks with God will have to deal with the "whys" - wondering why God doesn't do things just the way we would do it, especially when the answer seems so obvious.

3. (Psa_43:3 a) God, I need to be led by Your light and truth. Oh, send out Your light and Your truth!
Let them lead me;

a. Send out Your light and Your truth! The psalmist knows that his light and his truth isn't enough - he needs the light and truth of the Lord. It isn't within him, so if God doesn't send it, he doesn't have it.

b. Let them lead me: This is a prayer of submission. "Lord, I don't want you to send out Your light and truth just so I may admire them. I really want to submit myself to Your light and Your truth and have them lead me. I need a leader, so lead me!"

i. This begins the psalmist's procession of praise. He began in depression, but will end up praising God - and it all begins with the light and truth of the LORD God leading the way.

ii. "We seek not light to sin by, nor truth to be exalted by it, but that they may become our practical guides to the nearest communion with God." (Spurgeon)

B. The Psalmist describes his response to God's coming answer.

1. (Psa_43:3 b) When You answer my prayer, I will come to Your house. Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your tabernacle.

a. Let them bring me: The them of this statement refers back to the light and truth of the same verse. The psalmist wants God's light and truth to lead him to a specific place - to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle.

i. Here is the second step in the procession of praise. Led by the light and truth of the Lord, the psalmist comes to the tabernacle, to the tent of meeting with God. Any place God's people gather together to meet Him can become a tabernacle.

b. Your holy hill to Your tabernacle: The psalmist wants to go to the tent of meeting. He wants to because:

- He knows the Lord is there is a special way
- He knows that God's people are there
- He knows that it is a place where he can focus on the Lord

2. (Psa_43:4) When You answer my prayer, I will praise You. Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy;

And on the harp I will praise You, O God, my God.

a. I will go to the altar of God: Full of faith, the psalmist anticipates God's answer to his prayer, and declares that he will sacrifice (go to the altar) when the answer comes. This wouldn't be a sacrifice of atonement for sin, but for gratitude and celebration of fellowship with God.

i. This is the third stop on the procession of praise: the altar. "The way to God is ever the way of the altar. The way to the altar is opened by the sending out of light and truth from God." (Morgan) When we follow the light and truth of the LORD, it will lead us to His altar - the cross where Jesus was given as a sacrifice for our sins.

ii. Under the New Covenant we no longer offer animal sacrifices, but we still bring the sacrifice of praise. Heb_13:15 tells us how: Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. Our words and songs of praise become a sweet-smelling sacrifice unto the Lord.

b. On the harp I will praise You: The psalmist will not only praise God with animal sacrifice, but also with music and song. He has reached his destination on the procession of praise - led by the light and truth of the Lord, he came to the house of God, to the altary of God, and then it culminated in praise.

3. (Psa_43:5) When You answer my prayer, I will challenge my feelings. Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;

For I shall yet praise Him,

The help of my countenance and my God.

a. Why are you cast down, O my soul? The psalmist has hope of God's redemption, but it hasn't come yet. In the meantime, he will not "give in" to his feelings of depression and discouragement. Instead, he will challenge them and bring them before the Lord. He says to those "cast down"

and “disquieted” feelings, “Hope in God. He will come through again, because He has before.”

i. We see that at the end of the psalm none of the circumstances of the psalmist have changed - only his attitude, and what a difference that makes! “Not yet has the answer come. The darkness and the mystery are still about him, but the shining way is seen; and again the soul is forbidden to despair and hope is encouraged in God.” (Morgan)

b. The help of my countenance: The psalmist knew his countenance needed help - and God was just the one to bring it. Many times our face needs help, and we turn away from God.

(Psa 43:2) For you are the God who shelters me.⁵

Why do you reject me?⁶

Why must I walk around⁷ mourning⁸ because my enemies oppress me?

(Psa 43:3) Reveal⁹ your light¹⁰ and your faithfulness!

They will lead me,¹¹

they will escort¹² me back to your holy hill,¹³ and to the place where you live.¹⁴

(Psa 43:4) Then I will go¹⁵ to the altar of God, to the God who gives me ecstatic joy,¹⁶

so that I express my thanks to you,¹⁷ O God, my God, with a harp.

(Psa 43:5) Why are you depressed,¹⁸ O my soul?¹⁹

Why are you upset?²⁰

Wait for God!

For I will again give thanks

to my God for his saving intervention.²¹

(Psa 44:1) Psalm 44¹

For the music director; by the Korahites, a well-written song.²

O God, we have clearly heard;³ our ancestors⁴ have told us what you did⁵ in their days, in ancient times.⁶

(Psa 44:2) You, by your power,⁷ defeated nations and settled our fathers on their land;⁸ you crushed⁹ the people living there¹⁰ and enabled our ancestors to occupy it.¹¹

(Psa 44:3) For they did not conquer¹² the land by their swords, and they did not prevail by their strength,¹³ but rather by your power,¹⁴ strength¹⁵ and good favor,¹⁶ for you were partial to¹⁷ them.

(Psa 44:4) You are my¹⁸ king, O God!
Decree¹⁹ Jacob's²⁰ deliverance!

(Psa 44:5) By your power²¹ we will drive back²² our enemies;
by your strength²³ we will trample down²⁴ our foes!²⁵

(Psa 44:6) For I do not trust in my bow, and I do not prevail by my sword.

(Psa 44:7) For you deliver²⁶ us from our enemies;
you humiliate²⁷ those who hate us.

(Psa 44:8) In God I boast all day long,
and we will continually give thanks to your name. (Selah)

(Psa 44:9) But²⁸ you rejected and embarrassed us!
You did not go into battle with our armies.²⁹

(Psa 44:10) You made us retreat³⁰ from the enemy.

Those who hate us take whatever they want from us.³¹

(Psa 44:11) You handed us³² over like sheep to be eaten;
you scattered us among the nations.

(Psa 44:12) You sold³³ your people for a pittance;³⁴ you did
not ask a high price for them.³⁵

(Psa 44:13) You made us³⁶ an object of disdain to our
neighbors;
those who live on our borders taunt and insult us.³⁷

(Psa 44:14) You made us³⁸ an object of ridicule³⁹ among
the nations;
foreigners treat us with contempt.⁴⁰

(Psa 44:15) All day long I feel humiliated⁴¹ and am
overwhelmed with shame,⁴²

(Psa 44:16) before the vindictive enemy who ridicules and
insults me.⁴³

(Psa 44:17) All this has happened to us, even though we
have not rejected you⁴⁴ or violated your covenant with
us.⁴⁵

(Psa 44:18) We have not been unfaithful,⁴⁶
nor have we disobeyed your commands.⁴⁷

(Psa 44:19) Yet you have battered us, leaving us a heap of
ruins overrun by wild dogs;⁴⁸ you have covered us with
darkness.⁴⁹

(Psa 44:20) If we had rejected our God,⁵⁰
and spread out our hands in prayer to another god,⁵¹

(Psa 44:21) would not God discover it,

for he knows⁵² one's thoughts?⁵³

(Psa 44:22) Yet because of you⁵⁴ we are killed all day long;
we are treated like⁵⁵ sheep at the slaughtering block.⁵⁶

(Psa 44:23) Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, O Lord?
Wake up!⁵⁷ Do not reject us forever!

(Psa 44:24) Why do you look the other way,⁵⁸
and ignore⁵⁹ the way we are oppressed and mistreated?⁶⁰

(Psa 44:25) For we lie in the dirt,
with our bellies pressed to the ground.⁶¹

(Psa 44:26) Rise up and help us!
Rescue us⁶² because of your loyal love!

(Psa 45:1) Psalm 45¹

For the music director; according to the tune of "Lilies;"² by
the Korahites, a well-written poem,³ a love song.

My heart is stirred by a beautiful song.⁴
I say, "I have composed this special song⁵ for the king;
my tongue is as skilled as the stylus of an experienced
scribe."⁶

(Psa 45:2) You are the most handsome of all men!⁷
You speak in an impressive and fitting manner!⁸
For this reason⁹ God grants you continual blessings.¹⁰

(Psa 45:3) Strap your sword to your thigh, O warrior!¹¹
Appear in your majestic splendor!¹²

(Psa 45:4) Appear in your majesty and be victorious!¹³
Ride forth for the sake of what is right,¹⁴ on behalf of
justice!¹⁵

Then your right hand will accomplish mighty acts!¹⁶

(Psa 45:5) Your arrows are sharp
and penetrate the hearts of the king's enemies. Nations fall
at your feet.¹⁷

(Psa 45:6) Your throne,¹⁸ O God, is permanent.¹⁹
The scepter²⁰ of your kingdom is a scepter of justice.

(Psa 45:7) You love²¹ justice and hate evil.²²
For this reason God, your God²³ has anointed you²⁴
with the oil of joy,²⁵ elevating you above your
companions.²⁶

(Psa 45:8) All your garments are perfumed with²⁷ myrrh,
aloes, and cassia.
From the luxurious palaces²⁸ comes the music of stringed
instruments that makes you happy.²⁹

(Psa 45:9) Princesses³⁰ are among your honored guests,³¹
your bride³² stands at your right hand, wearing jewelry
made with gold from Ophir.³³

(Psa 45:10) Listen, O princess!³⁴
Observe and pay attention!³⁵
Forget your homeland³⁶ and your family!³⁷

(Psa 45:11) Then³⁸ the king will be attracted by³⁹ your
beauty.
After all, he is your master! Submit⁴⁰ to him!⁴¹

(Psa 45:12) Rich people from Tyre⁴²
will seek your favor by bringing a gift.⁴³

(Psa 45:13) The princess⁴⁴ looks absolutely magnificent,⁴⁵

decked out in pearls and clothed in a brocade trimmed with gold.⁴⁶

(Psa 45:14) In embroidered robes she is escorted to the king. Her attendants, the maidens of honor who follow her, are led before you.⁴⁷

(Psa 45:15) They are bubbling with joy as they walk in procession and enter the royal palace.⁴⁸

(Psa 45:16) Your⁴⁹ sons will carry⁵⁰ on the dynasty of your ancestors;⁵¹ you will make them princes throughout the land.

(Psa 45:17) I will proclaim your greatness through the coming years,⁵² then the nations will praise you⁵³ forever.

(Psa 46:1) Psalm 46¹

For the music director; by the Korahites; according to the alamoth style;² a song.

God is our strong refuge;³
he is truly our helper in times of trouble.⁴

(Psa 46:2) For this reason we do not fear⁵ when the earth shakes,⁶ and the mountains tumble into the depths of the sea,⁷

(Psa 46:3) when its waves⁸ crash⁹ and foam,
and the mountains shake¹⁰ before the surging sea.¹¹
(Selah)

(Psa 46:4) The river's channels bring joy to the city of God,¹²
the special, holy dwelling place of¹³ the sovereign One.¹⁴

(Psa 46:5) God lives within it,¹⁵ it cannot be moved.¹⁶
God rescues it¹⁷ at the break of dawn.¹⁸

(Psa 46:6) Nations are in uproar, kingdoms are
overthrown.¹⁹
God²⁰ gives a shout,²¹ the earth dissolves.²²

(Psa 46:7) The LORD who commands armies is on our
side!²³
The God of Jacob²⁴ is our protector!²⁵ (Selah)

(Psa 46:8) Come! Witness the exploits²⁶ of the LORD, who
brings devastation to the earth!²⁷

(Psa 46:9) He brings an end to wars throughout the earth;²⁸
he shatters²⁹ the bow and breaks³⁰ the spear; he burns³¹
the shields with fire.³²

(Psa 46:10) He says,³³ "Stop your striving and recognize³⁴
that I am God!
I will be exalted³⁵ over³⁶ the nations! I will be exalted
over³⁷ the earth!"

(Psa 46:11) The LORD who commands armies is on our
side!³⁸
The God of Jacob³⁹ is our protector!⁴⁰ (Selah)
(Psa 47:1) Psalm 47

For the music director; by the Korahites; a psalm.

All you nations, clap your hands! Shout out to God in
celebration!²

(Guzik)
Psa 47:1-9

Psalms 47 – Praising the King of All the Earth

This is a wonderful Psalm celebrating a great victory of a great King. Perhaps it was occasioned by the victory of a king such as Jehoshaphat (as in 2Ch_20:15-23), but there is no doubt that it prophetically has in mind the ascension of the Messiah to His throne and celebrates His reign over the whole earth.

“In later Jewish usage Psalms 47 was utilized as part of the New Year’s service.” (VanGemeren) A. The King of All the Earth blesses His chosen people.

1. (Psa_47:1) The command to praise. Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!

a. Oh, clap your hands: The clapping of hands draws attention to something, usually as an outward expression of inward joy. The Bible uses it both in a negative and positive sense.

i. This is a word for all nations, and “If they cannot all speak the same tongue, the symbolic language of the hands they can all use.” (Spurgeon)

ii. There is both clapping for praise (Psa_47:1, Psa_98:8, Isa_55:12) and clapping in derision (Job_27:23, Lam_2:15, Nah_3:19).

b. All you peoples: This is a command to more than Israel or followers of God; it is a command to all ... peoples. It is ultimately the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham to bless all the peoples of the earth through his Descendant, the Messiah (Gen_12:2-3).

i. “Psalms 47 follows quite naturally after Psalms 46. Psalms 46 is focused on the security of God’s people, noting how God had delivered them from one of their great enemies. It challenged the nations to observe that deliverance and

stand in awe before God.” Now, in Psalms 47 God says to those same people: “Rejoice and be happy; the King of Israel is also the King of all the Earth.” (Boice)

c. Shout to God: The note is strong and happy. The Psalmist did not have in mind sleepy singing or whispered prayers.

i. Most people are not against shouting or enthusiastic outbursts; they simply believe there is a right and wrong place for such shouting. Sadly, many who think a loud exclamation is fine at a football game think it is a scandal in the church.

2. (Psa_47:2) The reason for praise. For the Lord Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.

a. The Lord Most High is awesome: The Psalmist presents this without proof, as a self-evident fact. He considered it obvious to everyone, as much as water is wet and fire is hot.

b. He is a great King over all the earth: Both the office and the realm are important. He is a great King, in that He is the King of Kings and the highest monarch. His realm extends over all the earth, and He is sovereign in all places.

i. The pagan gods of the ancient world (Baal, Molech, Ashtoreth, and so forth) were imagined to be territorial gods. Their authority was limited to a nation or a region. The Psalmist wants us to know that the Lord God is not like one of these imagined gods.

3. (Psa_47:3-4) God’s special care for His chosen. He will subdue the peoples under us, And the nations under our feet.

He will choose our inheritance for us,

The excellence of Jacob whom He loves. Selah

a. He will subdue the peoples under us: Here the Psalmist speaks as one of God's chosen nation, Israel. He looks forward to the time when the righteous reign of the great King will be exercised all over the earth, and Israel will assume its destined place of leadership among the nations.

i. Without doubt, the Psalmist knew that this great King would be the Messiah; yet he looked ahead to the hope of the Messiah. We look back at the fulfillment of the promise to send the Messiah, fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is the great King who will rule the earth and subdue the nations, granting believing Israel superpower status in the coming age.

b. He will choose our inheritance for us: The Psalmist shows his great confidence in the wisdom and goodness of the great King. He is happy to let the great King choose our inheritance.

i. It is a glorious fact that our great King Jesus has chosen the inheritance of His people. Eph_1:3-6 is just one passage that describes some of His choosing for us:

- He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.
- He chose us to be holy and blameless before Him in love.
- He chose us to be adopted as sons into His family.

ii. It is a wise prayer, to ask our great King Jesus to choose our inheritance for us. We often get into trouble by wanting to choose our own inheritance.

- We sometimes want to choose our own blessings. One has health, another has wealth, a third has great talents; each

wishes they had what the other has. Yet it is far better to let God choose our blessings.

- We sometimes want to choose our own calling. One sees the calling of another and thinks that the calling of the other is better, or they want to imitate the calling of another instead of running their own race.

- We sometimes want to choose our own crosses. We think that our own problems are so much worse than others, and we think that we could bear any number of crosses – except the one He chose for us.

iii. Charles Spurgeon thought that this was a Psalm of David and not the sons of Korah; that he wrote it, but they sang it. He wrote, “Our ear has grown accustomed to the ring of David’s compositions, and we are morally certain that we hear it in this Psalm.” This may or may not be true, but certainly David knew that his King chose his inheritance at each stage of his life, and he showed contentment with the inheritance God chose for him.

- As an anonymous shepherd boy

- As a warrior against Goliath

- As a fugitive running from Saul

- As a king over Israel

- As a disciplined sinner

c. The excellence of Jacob whom He loves: This explains why we can be at peace with the inheritance He chooses for us. We know that for Jesus’ sake and because we are in Him, God is for us and not against us. He loves us as His chosen;

because He chose us we are happy to let Him choose our inheritance for us.

- i. "The pride of Jacob is a brief way of saying 'Jacob's glorious land.' " (Kidner)
- ii. "The Holy Land is called 'the excellency of Jacob,' or 'the pride of Jacob,' on account of its beauty, and the excellence and variety of its productions (see Deu_8:7-9; 2Ki_18:22)." (Rawlinson)
- iii. Whom He loves provokes a question: Why does God so love Jacob? Why does God so love the church? Why does God so love the world? The answer is that the reasons for His love are in Him, not in the ones He loves.

B. A call to praise the King of All the Earth.

1. (Psa_47:5) The fact of praise. God has gone up with a shout,
The Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

a. God has gone up with a shout: The going up here refers to ascending to a royal throne. The idea is that the great King has taken His throne and therefore receives a shout of praise.

i. The idea is that God comes down from heaven to help and save His people, and when He goes back up He deserves praise and acclamation from His people.

ii. Jesus ascended the royal throne in heaven after He finished His work for us on the cross and proved it by the empty tomb. He can only go up with a shout because He came down in humility to fight for His people and to save them.

b. The Lord with the sound of a trumpet: In the world of ancient Israel the trumpet made the strongest and clearest sound; it was the sound of victory. To honor God clearly and strongly for His victory on our behalf, the sound of a trumpet is heard.

2. (Psa_47:6-7) The call to praise and the reason for it. Sing praises to God, sing praises!
Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with understanding.

a. Sing praises! In this context, this is almost a command. It is a fitting command in light of the glory of the King of all the earth. God might have given speech to humanity without the gift of song; there are some tone deaf people in the world. What is the case of some might have been the case of all; but God gave the gift of song and music to men, and the highest use of this gift is to praise the God who gave it.

i. "Let a thousand people speak at once; all thought and feeling are drowned in hubbub. But let them sing together in perfect time and tune; both the thought and feeling are raised to a pitch of energy else conceivable." (Rawlinson)

ii. Sing praises: "A single word in Hebrew, with therefore a swifter, livelier impact." (Kidner)

iii. "This word is four times repeated in this short verse, and shows at once the earnestness and happiness of the people. They are the words of exultation and triumph. Feel your obligation to God; express it in thanksgiving." (Clarke) b. The King of all the earth: The idea from the second verse is repeated for emphasis. God's glorious authority extends far beyond the land or people of Israel. He is the global God, the King of all the earth.

c. Sing praises with understanding: Praise is appropriately offered with singing and should also be made with understanding. God wants our worship to be intelligent and not mindless. It is not necessary to be smart to worship God, but we should worship Him with all our being, including our mind (Mar_12:30).

i. "We must not be guided by the time, but the words of the Psalm; we must mind the matter more than the music, and consider what we sing, as well as how we sing; the tune may affect the fancy, but it is the matter affects the heart, and that God principally eyes." (Spurgeon)

ii. Sing praises with understanding: According to Kidner, Paul had the Septuagint translation of this phrase in mind when he wrote in 1Co_14:15, I will sing with the mind also.

iii. All in all, this Psalm shows us how we are to praise God:

- Praise Him cheerfully when you clap your hands as an expression of your inward joy.

- Praise Him universally together with all you peoples who should praise the Lord.

- Praise Him vocally as you shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

- Praise Him frequently, as the idea of sing praises is repeated often. You cannot praise Him too much.

- Praise Him intelligently, as you are to sing praises with understanding and to know and proclaim the reasons for our praise.

C. The King of All the Earth and the nations.

1. (Psa_47:8) The reign of the King. God reigns over the nations;
God sits on His holy throne.

a. God reigns over the nations: The LORD is not King of all the earth in some passive or ceremonial sense. He reigns over the nations and moves history towards His desired destination.

b. God sits on His holy throne: When John had his heavenly experience as recorded in Revelation 4, 5 he described everything in heaven in relation to this occupied throne. The center of heaven – indeed, the center of all creation – is this occupied throne in heaven.

i. God sits upon the throne; it is not empty. He is no empty or ceremonial ruler. ii. It is His throne; it belongs to Him and to none other.

iii. It is a holy throne, where the holiness of God has been perfectly satisfied by the work of Jesus on the cross. Therefore, it is both a holy throne and a throne of grace (Heb_4:16).

2. (Psa_47:9) The King is exalted above the nations. The princes of the people have gathered together, The people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God;

He is greatly exalted.

a. The princes of the people have gathered: In the mind of the Psalmist, the leaders of God's people gather to both receive and exalt the King of all the earth.

i. "The promise concerning the blessing of the tribes of the nations in the seed of the patriarch is being fulfilled; for the

nobles draw the peoples who are protected by them after themselves.” (Keil and Delitzsch)

ii. “The princes of the earth belong especially to God, since ‘by him kings reign, and princes decree justice’ (Pro_8:15).” (Rawlinson)

b. The shields of the earth belong to God: “The Septuagint translates this hoi krataioi, the strong ones of the earth... The words refer to something by which the inhabitants of the earth are defended; God’s providence, guardian angels, etc., etc.” (Clarke)

i. “It is the abundant fulfillment of the promise of Gen_12:3; it anticipates what Paul expounds of the inclusion of the Gentiles as Abraham’s sons (Rom_4:11; Gal_3:7-9).” (Kidner)
(Psa 47:2) For the sovereign LORD³ is awe-inspiring;⁴ he is the great king who rules the whole earth!⁵

(Psa 47:3) He subdued nations beneath us⁶ and countries⁷ under our feet.

(Psa 47:4) He picked out for us a special land⁸
to be a source of pride for⁹ Jacob,¹⁰ whom he loves.¹¹
(Selah)

(Psa 47:5) God has ascended his throne¹² amid loud shouts;¹³
the LORD has ascended his throne amid the blaring of ram’s horns.¹⁴

(Psa 47:6) Sing to God! Sing!
Sing to our king! Sing!

(Psa 47:7) For God is king of the whole earth!
Sing a well-written song!¹⁵

(Psa 47:8) God reigns¹⁶ over the nations!

God sits on his holy throne!

(Psa 47:9) The nobles of the nations assemble,
along with the people of the God of Abraham,¹⁷
for God has authority over the rulers¹⁸ of the earth. He is
highly exalted!¹⁹

(Psa 48:1) Psalm 48

A song, a psalm by the Korahites.

The LORD is great and certainly worthy of praise in the city
of our God,² his holy hill.

(Psa 48:2) It is lofty and pleasing to look at,³ a source of joy
to the whole earth.⁴

Mount Zion resembles the peaks of Zaphon;⁵ it is the city of
the great king.

(Psa 48:3) God is in its fortresses;
he reveals himself as its defender.⁶

(Psa 48:4) For⁷ look, the kings assemble;⁸ they advance
together.

(Psa 48:5) As soon as they see,⁹ they are shocked;¹⁰ they
are terrified, they quickly retreat.¹¹

(Psa 48:6) Look at them shake uncontrollably,¹² like a
woman writhing in childbirth.¹³

(Psa 48:7) With an east wind
you shatter¹⁴ the large ships.¹⁵

(Psa 48:8) We heard about God's mighty deeds, now we
have seen them,¹⁶ in the city of the LORD, the invincible
Warrior,¹⁷

in the city of our God.
God makes it permanently secure.¹⁸ (Selah)

(Psa 48:9) We reflect on your loyal love, O God, within your temple.

(Psa 48:10) The praise you receive as far away as the ends of the earth is worthy of your reputation, O God.¹⁹
You execute justice!²⁰

(Psa 48:11) Mount Zion rejoices;
the towns²¹ of Judah are happy,²² because of your acts of judgment.²³

(Psa 48:12) Walk around²⁴ Zion! Encircle it!
Count its towers!

(Psa 48:13) Consider its defenses!²⁵
Walk through²⁶ its fortresses,
so you can tell the next generation about it!²⁷

(Psa 48:14) For God, our God, is our defender forever!²⁸
He guides²⁹ us!³⁰
(Psa 49:1) Psalm 49¹

For the music director, a psalm by the Korahites.

Listen to this, all you nations!
Pay attention, all you inhabitants of the world!²

(Psa 49:2) Pay attention, all you people,³ both rich and poor!

(Psa 49:3) I will declare a wise saying;⁴
I will share my profound thoughts.⁵

(Psa 49:4) I will learn a song that imparts wisdom;
I will then sing my insightful song to the accompaniment of
a harp.⁶

(Psa 49:5) Why should I be afraid in times of trouble,⁷
when the sinful deeds of deceptive men threaten to
overwhelm me?⁸

(Psa 49:6) They trust⁹ in their wealth and boast¹⁰ in their
great riches.

(Psa 49:7) Certainly a man cannot rescue his brother;¹¹ he
cannot pay God an adequate ransom price¹²

(Psa 49:8) (the ransom price for a human life¹³ is too high,
and people go to their final destiny),¹⁴

(Psa 49:9) so that he might continue to live¹⁵ forever and
not experience death.¹⁶

(Psa 49:10) Surely¹⁷ one sees¹⁸ that even wise people
die;¹⁹ fools and spiritually insensitive people all pass
away²⁰ and leave their wealth to others.²¹

(Psa 49:11) Their grave becomes their permanent residence,
their eternal dwelling place.²²

They name their lands after themselves,²³

(Psa 49:12) but, despite their wealth, people do not last,²⁴
they are like animals²⁵ that perish.²⁶

(Psa 49:13) This is the destiny of fools,²⁷
and of those who approve of their philosophy.²⁸ (Selah)

(Psa 49:14) They will travel to Sheol like sheep,²⁹ with
death as their shepherd.³⁰

The godly will rule³¹ over them when the day of vindication dawns;³²

Sheol will consume their bodies and they will no longer live in impressive houses.³³

(Psa 49:15) But³⁴ God will rescue³⁵ my life³⁶ from the power³⁷ of Sheol;

certainly³⁸ he will pull me to safety.³⁹ (Selah)

(Psa 49:16) Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich⁴⁰ and his wealth multiplies!⁴¹

(Psa 49:17) For he will take nothing with him when he dies; his wealth will not follow him down into the grave.⁴²

(Psa 49:18) He pronounces this blessing on himself while he is alive: "May men praise you, for you have done well!"

(Psa 49:19) But he will join his ancestors;⁴³ they will never again see the light of day.⁴⁴

(Psa 49:20) Wealthy people do not understand;⁴⁵ they are like animals⁴⁶ that perish.⁴⁷

(Psa 50:1) Psalm 50¹

A psalm by Asaph.

El, God, the LORD² speaks,
and summons the earth to come from the east and west.³

(Psa 50:2) From Zion, the most beautiful of all places,⁴
God comes in splendor.⁵

(Psa 50:3) Our God approaches and is not silent;⁶
consuming fire goes ahead of him and all around him a storm rages.⁷

(Psa 50:4) He summons the heavens above,
as well as the earth, so that he might judge his people.⁸

(Psa 50:5) He says:⁹
“Assemble my covenant people before me,¹⁰
those who ratified a covenant with me by sacrifice!”¹¹

(Psa 50:6) The heavens declare his fairness,¹² for God is
judge.¹³ (Selah)

(Psa 50:7) He says:¹⁴
“Listen my people! I am speaking! Listen Israel! I am
accusing you!¹⁵
I am God, your God!

(Psa 50:8) I am not condemning¹⁶ you because of your
sacrifices,
or because of your burnt sacrifices that you continually offer
me.¹⁷

(Psa 50:9) I do not need to take¹⁸ a bull from your
household or goats from your sheepfolds.

(Psa 50:10) For every wild animal in the forest belongs to
me, as well as the cattle that graze on a thousand hills.¹⁹

(Psa 50:11) I keep track of²⁰ every bird in the hills, and the
insects²¹ of the field are mine.

(Psa 50:12) Even if I were hungry, I would not tell you, for
the world and all it contains belong to me.

(Psa 50:13) Do I eat the flesh of bulls?
Do I drink the blood of goats?²²

(Psa 50:14) Present to God a thank-offering!

Repay your vows to the sovereign One!²³

(Psa 50:15) Pray to me when you are in trouble!²⁴

I will deliver you, and you will honor me!”²⁵ (Psa 50:16) God says this to the evildoer:²⁶

“How can you declare my commands, and talk about my covenant?”²⁷

(Psa 50:17) For you hate instruction and reject my words.²⁸

(Psa 50:18) When you see a thief, you join him;²⁹

you associate with men who are unfaithful to their wives.³⁰

(Psa 50:19) You do damage with words,³¹ and use your tongue to deceive.³²

(Psa 50:20) You plot against your brother;³³ you slander your own brother.³⁴

(Psa 50:21) When you did these things, I was silent,³⁵ so you thought I was exactly like you.³⁶

But now I will condemn³⁷ you and state my case against you!³⁸

(Psa 50:22) Carefully consider this, you who reject God!³⁹

Otherwise I will rip you to shreds⁴⁰ and no one will be able to rescue you.

(Psa 50:23) Whoever presents a thank-offering honors me.⁴¹

To whoever obeys my commands, I will reveal my power to deliver.”⁴²

(Psa 51:1) Psalm 51

For the music director; a psalm of David, written when Nathan the prophet confronted him after David’s affair with

Bathsheba.2

Have mercy on me, O God, because of³ your loyal love!
Because of⁴ your great compassion, wipe away my
rebellious acts!⁵

(Psa 51:2) Wash away my wrongdoing!⁶
Cleanse me of my sin!⁷

(Psa 51:3) For I am aware of⁸ my rebellious acts; I am
forever conscious of my sin.⁹

(Psa 51:4) Against you — you above all¹⁰ — I have sinned; I
have done what is evil in your sight.
So¹¹ you are just when you confront me;¹² you are right
when you condemn me.¹³

(Psa 51:5) Look, I was guilty of sin from birth,
a sinner the moment my mother conceived me.¹⁴

(Psa 51:6) Look,¹⁵ you desire¹⁶ integrity in the inner
man;¹⁷ you want me to possess wisdom.¹⁸

(Psa 51:7) Sprinkle me¹⁹ with water²⁰ and I will be pure;²¹
wash me²² and I will be whiter than snow.²³

(Psa 51:8) Grant me the ultimate joy of being forgiven!²⁴
May the bones²⁵ you crushed rejoice!²⁶

(Psa 51:9) Hide your face²⁷ from my sins!
Wipe away²⁸ all my guilt!

(Psa 51:10) Create for me a pure heart, O God!²⁹
Renew a resolute spirit within me!³⁰

(Psa 51:11) Do not reject me!³¹

Do not take your Holy Spirit³² away from me!³³

(Psa 51:12) Let me again experience the joy of your deliverance!

Sustain me by giving me the desire to obey!³⁴

(Psa 51:13) Then I will teach³⁵ rebels your merciful ways,³⁶ and sinners will turn³⁷ to you.

(Psa 51:14) Rescue me from the guilt of murder,³⁸ O God, the God who delivers me!

Then my tongue will shout for joy because of your deliverance.³⁹

(Psa 51:15) O Lord, give me the words!⁴⁰

Then my mouth will praise you.⁴¹

(Psa 51:16) Certainly⁴² you do not want a sacrifice, or else I would offer it;⁴³

you do not desire a burnt sacrifice.⁴⁴

(Psa 51:17) The sacrifices God desires are a humble spirit⁴⁵

—

O God, a humble and repentant heart⁴⁶ you will not reject.⁴⁷

(Psa 51:18) Because you favor Zion, do what is good for her!⁴⁸

Fortify⁴⁹ the walls of Jerusalem!⁵⁰

(Psa 51:19) Then you will accept⁵¹ the proper sacrifices, burnt sacrifices and whole offerings; then bulls will be sacrificed⁵² on your altar.⁵³

(Psa 52:1) Psalm 52¹

For the music director; a well-written song² by David. It was written when Doeg the Edomite went and informed Saul: "David has arrived at the home of Ahimelech."³

Why do you boast about your evil plans,⁴ O powerful man? God's loyal love protects me all day long!⁵

(Psa 52:2) Your tongue carries out your destructive plans;⁶ it is as effective as a sharp razor, O deceiver.⁷

(Psa 52:3) You love evil more than good, lies more than speaking the truth.⁸ (Selah)

(Psa 52:4) You love to use all the words that destroy,⁹ and the tongue that deceives.

(Psa 52:5) Yet¹⁰ God will make you a permanent heap of ruins.¹¹

He will scoop you up¹² and remove you from your home;¹³ he will uproot you from the land of the living. (Selah)

(Psa 52:6) When the godly see this, they will be filled with awe, and will mock the evildoer, saying:¹⁴

(Psa 52:7) "Look, here is the man who would not make¹⁵ God his protector!

He trusted in his great wealth and was confident about his plans to destroy others."¹⁶

(Psa 52:8) But I¹⁷ am like a flourishing¹⁸ olive tree in the house of God; I continually¹⁹ trust in God's loyal love.

(Psa 52:9) I will continually²⁰ thank you when²¹ you execute judgment;²²

I will rely²³ on you,²⁴ for your loyal followers know you are good.²⁵

(Psa 53:1) Psalm 53¹

For the music director; according to the machalath style;² a well-written song³ by David.

Fools say to themselves,⁴ "There is no God."⁵
They sin and commit evil deeds;⁶ none of them does what is right.⁷

(Psa 53:2) God looks down from heaven⁸ at the human race,⁹ to see if there is anyone who is wise¹⁰ and seeks God.¹¹

(Psa 53:3) Everyone rejects God;¹² they are all morally corrupt.¹³
None of them does what is right,¹⁴ not even one!

(Psa 53:4) All those who behave wickedly¹⁵ do not understand¹⁶ —
those who devour my people as if they were eating bread,
and do not call out to God.

(Psa 53:5) They are absolutely terrified,¹⁷
even by things that do not normally cause fear.¹⁸
For God annihilates¹⁹ those who attack you.²⁰
You are able to humiliate them because God has rejected them.²¹

(Psa 53:6) I wish the deliverance²² of Israel would come from Zion!
When God restores the well-being of his people,²³ may Jacob rejoice,²⁴
may Israel be happy!²⁵
(Psa 54:1) Psalm 54¹

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a well-written song 2 by David. It was written

when the Ziphites came and informed Saul: "David is hiding with us." 3

O God, deliver me by your name!4
Vindicate me5 by your power!

(Psa 54:2) O God, listen to my prayer!
Pay attention to what I say!6

(Psa 54:3) For foreigners7 attack me;8
ruthless men, who do not respect God, seek my life.9 (Selah)

(Psa 54:4) Look, God is my deliverer!10
The Lord is among those who support me.11

(Psa 54:5) May those who wait to ambush me12 be repaid
for their evil!13
As a demonstration of your faithfulness,14 destroy them!

(Psa 54:6) With a freewill offering I will sacrifice15 to you!
I will give thanks to your name, O LORD, for it is good!

(Psa 54:7) Surely16 he rescues me from all trouble,17 and I
triumph over my enemies.18
(Psa 55:1) Psalm 551

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed
instruments; a well-written song 2 by David.

Listen, O God, to my prayer!
Do not ignore3 my appeal for mercy!

(Psa 55:2) Pay attention to me and answer me!
I am so upset4 and distressed,5 I am beside myself,6

(Psa 55:3) because of what the enemy says,7

and because of how the wicked⁸ pressure me,⁹ for they hurl trouble¹⁰ down upon me¹¹ and angrily attack me.

(Psa 55:4) My heart beats violently¹² within me; the horrors of death overcome me.¹³

(Psa 55:5) Fear and panic overpower me;¹⁴ terror overwhelms¹⁵ me.

(Psa 55:6) I say,¹⁶ “I wish I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and settle in a safe place!

(Psa 55:7) Look, I will escape to a distant place; I will stay in the wilderness. (Selah)

(Psa 55:8) I will hurry off to a place that is safe from the strong wind¹⁷ and the gale.”

(Psa 55:9) Confuse them,¹⁸ O Lord! Frustrate their plans!¹⁹ For I see violence and conflict in the city.

(Psa 55:10) Day and night they walk around on its walls,²⁰ while wickedness and destruction²¹ are within it.

(Psa 55:11) Disaster is within it; violence²² and deceit do not depart from its public square.

(Psa 55:12) Indeed,²³ it is not an enemy who insults me, or else I could bear it; it is not one who hates me who arrogantly taunts me,²⁴ or else I could hide from him.

(Psa 55:13) But it is you,²⁵ a man like me,²⁶ my close friend in whom I confided.²⁷

(Psa 55:14) We would share personal thoughts with each other;²⁸ in God's temple we would walk together among the crowd.

(Psa 55:15) May death destroy them!²⁹
May they go down alive into Sheol!³⁰
For evil is in their dwelling place and in their midst.
(Psa 55:16) As for me, I will call out to God, and the LORD will deliver me.

(Psa 55:17) During the evening, morning, and noontime
I will lament and moan,³¹ and he will hear³² me.³³

(Psa 55:18) He will rescue³⁴ me and protect me from those who attack me,³⁵ even though³⁶ they greatly outnumber me.³⁷

(Psa 55:19) God, the one who has reigned as king from long ago, will hear and humiliate them.³⁸ (Selah) They refuse to change,
and do not fear God.³⁹

(Psa 55:20) He⁴⁰ attacks⁴¹ his friends;⁴²
he breaks his solemn promises to them.⁴³

(Psa 55:21) His words are as smooth as butter,⁴⁴ but he harbors animosity in his heart.⁴⁵
His words seem softer than oil,
but they are really like sharp swords.⁴⁶

(Psa 55:22) Throw your burden⁴⁷ upon the LORD, and he will sustain you.⁴⁸
He will never allow the godly to be upended.⁴⁹

(Psa 55:23) But you, O God, will bring them⁵⁰ down to the deep Pit.⁵¹

Violent and deceitful people⁵² will not live even half a normal lifespan.⁵³

But as for me, I trust in you.

(Psa 56:1) Psalm 56¹

For the music director; according to the yonath-elem-rechovim style;² a prayer³ of David, written when the Philistines captured him in Gath.⁴

Have mercy on me, O God, for men are attacking me!⁵

All day long hostile enemies⁶ are tormenting me.⁷

(Psa 56:2) Those who anticipate my defeat⁸ attack me all day long.

Indeed,⁹ many are fighting against me, O Exalted One.¹⁰

(Psa 56:3) When¹¹ I am afraid, I trust in you.

(Psa 56:4) In God — I boast in his promise¹² —

in God I trust, I am not afraid. What can mere men¹³ do to me?¹⁴

(Psa 56:5) All day long they cause me trouble;¹⁵ they make a habit of plotting my demise.¹⁶

(Psa 56:6) They stalk¹⁷ and lurk;¹⁸ they watch my every step,¹⁹

as²⁰ they prepare to take my life.²¹

(Psa 56:7) Because they are bent on violence, do not let them escape!²²

In your anger²³ bring down the nations,²⁴ O God!

(Psa 56:8) You keep track of my misery.²⁵

Put my tears in your leather container!²⁶

Are they not recorded in your scroll?²⁷

(Psa 56:9) My enemies will turn back when I cry out to you for help;²⁸

I know that God is on my side.²⁹

(Psa 56:10) In God — I boast in his promise³⁰ —
in the LORD — I boast in his promise³¹ —

(Psa 56:11) in God I trust, I am not afraid.
What can mere men³² do to me?³³

(Psa 56:12) I am obligated to fulfill the vows I made to you,
O God;³⁴

I will give you the thank-offerings you deserve,³⁵

(Psa 56:13) when you deliver³⁶ my life from death.

You keep my feet from stumbling,³⁷

so that I might serve³⁸ God as I enjoy life.³⁹

(Psa 57:1) Psalm 57¹

For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style;²
a prayer³ of David, written when he fled from Saul into the
cave.⁴

Have mercy on me, O God! Have mercy on me! For in you I
have taken shelter.⁵

In the shadow of your wings⁶ I take shelter until trouble
passes.

(Psa 57:2) I cry out for help to the sovereign God,⁷ to the
God who vindicates⁸ me.

(Psa 57:3) May he send help from heaven and deliver me⁹
from my enemies who hurl insults!¹⁰ (Selah) May God send
his loyal love and faithfulness!

(Psa 57:4) I am surrounded by lions;
I lie down¹¹ among those who want to devour me;¹² men
whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are a
sharp sword.¹³

(Psa 57:5) Rise up¹⁴ above the sky, O God!
May your splendor cover the whole earth!¹⁵

(Psa 57:6) They have prepared a net to trap me;¹⁶
I am discouraged.¹⁷
They have dug a pit for me.¹⁸
They will fall¹⁹ into it! (Selah)

(Psa 57:7) I am determined,²⁰ O God! I am determined!
I will sing and praise you!

(Psa 57:8) Awake, my soul!²¹
Awake, O stringed instrument and harp! I will wake up at
dawn!²²

(Psa 57:9) I will give you thanks before the nations, O
Master!
I will sing praises to you before foreigners!²³

(Psa 57:10) For your loyal love extends beyond the sky,²⁴
and your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

(Psa 57:11) Rise up²⁵ above the sky, O God!
May your splendor cover the whole earth!²⁶
(Psa 58:1) Psalm 58¹

For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style;²
a prayer³ of David.

Do you rulers really pronounce just decisions?⁴
Do you judge people⁵ fairly?

(Psa 58:2) No!⁶ You plan how to do what is unjust;⁷ you deal out violence in the earth.⁸

(Psa 58:3) The wicked turn aside from birth;⁹ liars go astray as soon as they are born.¹⁰

(Psa 58:4) Their venom is like that of a snake,¹¹ like a deaf serpent¹² that does not hear,¹³

(Psa 58:5) that does not respond to¹⁴ the magicians, or to a skilled snake-charmer.

(Psa 58:6) O God, break the teeth in their mouths!
Smash the jawbones of the lions, O LORD!

(Psa 58:7) Let them disappear¹⁵ like water that flows away!¹⁶
Let them wither like grass!¹⁷

(Psa 58:8) Let them be¹⁸ like a snail that melts away as it moves along!¹⁹
Let them be like²⁰ stillborn babies²¹ that never see the sun!

(Psa 58:9) Before the kindling is even placed under your pots,²²
he²³ will sweep it away along with both the raw and cooked meat.²⁴

(Psa 58:10) The godly²⁵ will rejoice when they see vengeance carried out;
they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.

(Psa 58:11) Then²⁶ observers²⁷ will say,
“Yes indeed, the godly are rewarded!²⁸

Yes indeed, there is a God who judges²⁹ in the earth!"
(Psa 59:1) Psalm 59¹

For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style;²
a prayer³ of David, written when Saul sent men to surround
his house and murder him.⁴

Deliver me from my enemies, my God! Protect me⁵ from
those who attack me!⁶

(Psa 59:2) Deliver me from evildoers!⁷
Rescue me from violent men!⁸

(Psa 59:3) For look, they wait to ambush me;⁹ powerful men
stalk¹⁰ me,
but not because I have rebelled or sinned, O LORD.¹¹

(Psa 59:4) Though I have done nothing wrong,¹² they are
anxious to attack.¹³
Spring into action and help me! Take notice of me!¹⁴

(Psa 59:5) You, O LORD God, the invincible warrior,¹⁵ the
God of Israel, rouse yourself and punish¹⁶ all the nations!
Have no mercy on any treacherous evildoers! (Selah)

(Psa 59:6) They return in the evening;
they growl¹⁷ like a dog
and prowl around outside¹⁸ the city.

(Psa 59:7) Look, they hurl insults at me and openly threaten
to kill me,¹⁹ for they say,²⁰
"Who hears?"

(Psa 59:8) But you, O LORD, laugh in disgust at them;²¹ you
taunt²² all the nations.

(Psa 59:9) You are my source of strength! I will wait for you!²³

For God is my refuge.²⁴

(Psa 59:10) The God who loves me will help me;²⁵

God will enable me to triumph over²⁶ my enemies.²⁷

(Psa 59:11) Do not strike them dead suddenly,
because then my people might forget the lesson.²⁸

Use your power to make them homeless vagabonds and
then bring them down, O Lord who shields us!²⁹

(Psa 59:12) They speak sinful words.³⁰

So let them be trapped by their own pride and by the curses
and lies they speak!

(Psa 59:13) Angrily wipe them out! Wipe them out so they
vanish!

Let them know that God rules

in Jacob and to the ends of the earth! (Selah)

(Psa 59:14) They return in the evening;

they growl³¹ like a dog

and prowl around outside³² the city.

(Psa 59:15) They wander around looking for something to
eat;

they refuse to sleep until they are full.³³

(Psa 59:16) As for me, I will sing about your strength; I will
praise your loyal love in the morning.

For you are my refuge³⁴

and my place of shelter when I face trouble.³⁵

(Psa 59:17) You are my source of strength! I will sing praises
to you!³⁶

For God is my refuge,³⁷ the God who loves me.³⁸
(Psa 60:1) Psalm 60¹

For the music director; according to the shushan-eduth style;² a prayer³ of David written to instruct others.⁴ It was written when he fought against Aram Naharaim and Aram-Zobah. That was when Joab turned back and struck down⁵ 12,000 Edomites⁶ in the Valley of Salt.⁷

O God, you have rejected us.⁸
You suddenly turned on us in your anger.⁹
Please restore us!¹⁰

(Psa 60:2) You made the earth quake; you split it open.¹¹
Repair its breaches, for it is ready to fall.¹²

(Psa 60:3) You have made your people experience hard times;¹³ you have made us drink intoxicating wine.¹⁴

(Psa 60:4) You have given your loyal followers¹⁵ a rallying flag, so that they might seek safety from the bow.¹⁶ (Selah)
(Psa 60:5) Deliver by your power¹⁷ and answer me,¹⁸ so that the ones you love may be safe.¹⁹

(Psa 60:6) God has spoken in his sanctuary:²⁰
“I will triumph! I will parcel out Shechem;
the Valley of Succoth I will measure off.²¹

(Psa 60:7) Gilead belongs to me, as does Manasseh!²²
Ephraim is my helmet,²³
Judah my royal scepter.²⁴

(Psa 60:8) Moab is my washbasin.²⁵
I will make Edom serve me.²⁶
I will shout in triumph over Philistia.”²⁷

(Psa 60:9) Who will lead me into the fortified city?
Who will bring me to Edom?²⁸

(Psa 60:10) Have you not rejected us, O God?
O God, you do not go into battle with our armies.

(Psa 60:11) Give us help against the enemy,
for any help men might offer is futile.²⁹

(Psa 60:12) By God's power we will conquer;³⁰ he will
trample down³¹ our enemies.

(Psa 61:1) Psalm 61

For the music director; to be played on a stringed
instrument; written by David.

O God, hear my cry for help! Pay attention to my prayer!

(Psa 61:2) From the most remote place on earth²
I call out to you in my despair.³
Lead me⁴ up to an inaccessible rocky summit!⁵

(Psa 61:3) Indeed,⁶ you are⁷ my shelter,
a strong tower that protects me from the enemy.⁸

(Psa 61:4) I will be a permanent guest in your home;⁹
I will find shelter in the protection of your wings.¹⁰ (Selah)

(Psa 61:5) For you, O God, hear my vows;
you grant me the reward that belongs to your loyal
followers.¹¹

(Psa 61:6) Give the king long life!
Make his lifetime span several generations!¹²

(Psa 61:7) May he reign¹³ forever before God!

Decree that your loyal love and faithfulness should protect him.¹⁴

(Psa 61:8) Then I will sing praises to your name continually,¹⁵ as I fulfill¹⁶ my vows day after day.

(Psa 62:1) Psalm 62¹

For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of David.

For God alone I patiently wait;² he is the one who delivers me.³

(Psa 62:2) He alone is my protector⁴ and deliverer.
He is my refuge;⁵ I will not be upended.⁶

(Psa 62:3) How long will you threaten⁷ a man?
All of you are murderers,⁸
as dangerous as a leaning wall or an unstable fence.⁹

(Psa 62:4) They¹⁰ spend all their time planning how to bring him¹¹ down.¹²

They love to use deceit;¹³
they pronounce blessings with their mouths, but inwardly
they utter curses.¹⁴ (Selah)

(Psa 62:5) Patiently wait for God alone, my soul!¹⁵
For he is the one who gives me confidence.¹⁶

(Psa 62:6) He alone is my protector¹⁷ and deliverer.
He is my refuge;¹⁸ I will not be upended.¹⁹

(Psa 62:7) God delivers me and exalts me;
God is my strong protector and my shelter.²⁰

(Psa 62:8) Trust in him at all times, you people!
Pour out your hearts before him!²¹
God is our shelter! (Selah)

(Psa 62:9) Men are nothing but a mere breath;
human beings are unreliable.²²
When they are weighed in the scales,
all of them together are lighter than air.²³

(Psa 62:10) Do not trust in what you can gain by
oppression!²⁴
Do not put false confidence in what you can gain by
robbery!²⁵
If wealth increases, do not become attached to it!²⁶

(Psa 62:11) God has declared one principle;
two principles I have heard:²⁷
God is strong,²⁸

(Psa 62:12) and you, O Lord, demonstrate loyal love.²⁹
For you repay men for what they do.³⁰
(Psa 63:1) Psalm 63¹

A psalm of David, written when he was in the Judean
wilderness.²

O God, you are my God! I long for you!³
My soul thirsts⁴ for you, my flesh yearns for you,
in a dry and parched⁵ land where there is no water.

(Psa 63:2) Yes,⁶ in the sanctuary I have seen you,⁷ and
witnessed⁸ your power and splendor.

(Psa 63:3) Because⁹ experiencing¹⁰ your loyal love is better
than life itself, my lips will praise you.

(Psa 63:4) For this reason¹¹ I will praise you while I live;
in your name I will lift up my hands.¹²

(Psa 63:5) As if with choice meat¹³ you satisfy my soul.¹⁴
My mouth joyfully praises you,¹⁵

(Psa 63:6) whenever¹⁶ I remember you on my bed,
and think about you during the nighttime hours.

(Psa 63:7) For you are my deliverer;¹⁷ under your wings¹⁸ I
rejoice.

(Psa 63:8) My soul¹⁹ pursues you;²⁰ your right hand
upholds me.

(Psa 63:9) Enemies seek to destroy my life,²¹
but they will descend into the depths of the earth.²²

(Psa 63:10) Each one will be handed over to the sword;²³
their corpses will be eaten by jackals.²⁴

(Psa 63:11) But the king²⁵ will rejoice in God;
everyone who takes oaths in his name²⁶ will boast,
for the mouths of those who speak lies will be shut up.²⁷

(Psa 64:1) Psalm 64¹

For the music director; a psalm of David.

Listen to me,² O God, as I offer my lament!
Protect³ my life from the enemy's terrifying attacks.⁴

(Psa 64:2) Hide me from the plots of evil men, from the
crowd of evildoers.⁵

(Psa 64:3) They⁶ sharpen their tongues like a sword;
they aim their arrow, a slanderous charge,⁷

(Psa 64:4) in order to shoot down the innocent⁸ in secluded
places.

They shoot at him suddenly and are unafraid of retaliation.⁹

(Psa 64:5) They encourage one another to carry out their evil deed.¹⁰

They plan how to hide¹¹ snares,
and boast,¹² “Who will see them?”¹³

(Psa 64:6) They devise¹⁴ unjust schemes;
they disguise¹⁵ a well-conceived plot.¹⁶
Man’s inner thoughts cannot be discovered.¹⁷

(Psa 64:7) But God will shoot¹⁸ at them;
suddenly they will be¹⁹ wounded by an arrow.²⁰

(Psa 64:8) Their slander will bring about their demise.²¹
All who see them will shudder,²²

(Psa 64:9) and all people will fear.²³
They will proclaim²⁴ what God has done, and reflect on his deeds.

(Psa 64:10) The godly will rejoice in the LORD
and take shelter in him.
All the morally upright²⁵ will boast.²⁶
(Psa 65:1) Psalm 65¹

For the music director; a psalm of David, a song.

Praise awaits you,² O God, in Zion. Vows made to you are fulfilled.

(Psa 65:2) You hear prayers;³
all people approach you.⁴

(Psa 65:3) Our record of sins overwhelms me,⁵ but you forgive⁶ our acts of rebellion.

(Psa 65:4) How blessed⁷ is the one whom you choose, and allow to live in your palace courts.⁸
May we be satisfied with the good things of your house — your holy palace.⁹

(Psa 65:5) You answer our prayers by performing awesome acts of deliverance, O God, our savior.¹⁰
All the ends of the earth trust in you,¹¹
as well as those living across the wide seas.¹²

(Psa 65:6) You created the mountains by your power,¹³ and demonstrated your strength.¹⁴

(Psa 65:7) You calm the raging seas¹⁵ and their roaring waves,
as well as the commotion made by the nations.¹⁶

(Psa 65:8) Even those living in the most remote areas are awestruck by your acts;¹⁷ you cause those living in the east and west to praise you.¹⁸

(Psa 65:9) You visit the earth and give it rain;¹⁹ you make it rich and fertile²⁰
with overflowing streams full of water.²¹
You provide grain for them,²²
for you prepare the earth to yield its crops.²³

(Psa 65:10) You saturate²⁴ its furrows, and soak²⁵ its plowed ground.²⁶
With rain showers you soften its soil,²⁷ and make its crops grow.²⁸

(Psa 65:11) You crown the year with your good blessings,²⁹ and you leave abundance in your wake.³⁰

(Psa 65:12) The pastures in the wilderness glisten with moisture,³¹ and the hills are clothed with joy.³²

(Psa 65:13) The meadows are clothed with sheep, and the valleys are covered with grain. They shout joyfully, yes, they sing.

(Psa 66:1) Psalm 66¹

For the music director; a song, a psalm.

Shout out praise to God, all the earth!

(Psa 66:2) Sing praises about the majesty of his reputation!²
Give him the honor he deserves!³

(Psa 66:3) Say to God:
“How awesome are your deeds!
Because of your great power your enemies cower in fear⁴
before you.

(Psa 66:4) All the earth worships⁵ you and sings praises to you!
They sing praises to your name!” (Selah)

(Psa 66:5) Come and witness⁶ God’s exploits!⁷
His acts on behalf of people are awesome!⁸

(Psa 66:6) He turned the sea into dry land;⁹ they passed through the river on foot.¹⁰
Let us rejoice in him there!¹¹

(Psa 66:7) He rules¹² by his power forever;
he watches¹³ the nations.
Stubborn rebels should not exalt¹⁴ themselves. (Selah)

(Psa 66:8) Praise¹⁵ our God, you nations!
Loudly proclaim his praise!¹⁶

(Psa 66:9) He preserves our lives¹⁷
and does not allow our feet to slip.

(Psa 66:10) For¹⁸ you, O God, tested us;
you purified us like refined silver.

(Psa 66:11) You led us into a trap;¹⁹ you caused us to
suffer.²⁰

(Psa 66:12) You allowed men to ride over our heads;
we passed through fire and water,
but you brought us out into a wide open place.²¹

(Psa 66:13) I will enter²² your temple with burnt sacrifices; I
will fulfill the vows I made to you,
(Psa 66:14) which my lips uttered
and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble.

(Psa 66:15) I will offer up to you fattened animals as burnt
sacrifices, along with the smell of sacrificial rams.
I will offer cattle and goats. (Selah)

(Psa 66:16) Come! Listen, all you who are loyal to God!²³
I will declare what he has done for me.

(Psa 66:17) I cried out to him for help²⁴ and praised him
with my tongue.²⁵

(Psa 66:18) If I had harbored sin in my heart,²⁶ the Lord
would not have listened.

(Psa 66:19) However, God heard;
he listened to my prayer.

(Psa 66:20) God deserves praise,²⁷ for²⁸ he did not reject my prayer or abandon his love for me!²⁹

(Psa 67:1) Psalm 67¹

For the music director; to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm, a song.

May God show us his favor² and bless us!³

May he smile on us!⁴ (Selah)

(Guzik)

Psa 67:1-7

Psalms 67 - A Missionary Psalm

This Psalm has a heart to see God's way, God's salvation, and God's praise extended all through the earth. A. A request and reason for blessing.

1. (Psa_67:1) A request for blessing. God be merciful to us and bless us,

And cause His face to shine upon us. Selah

a. God be merciful to us and bless us: The words come from the Aaronic Blessing of Num_6:24-26, where the High Priest of Israel would pronounce this beautiful blessing upon the people.

b. God be merciful to us: The Psalmist first knew his need for mercy. This sets our heart in the right frame of mind; sinners who need the mercy of God. One may need more mercy than another, but we all need mercy.

i. "The best saints and the worst sinners may unite in this petition." (Spurgeon)

c. And bless us: Beyond the mercy of God – which He could show simply by leaving us alone, by not destroying us – we want God to bless us also. Can you imagine a guilty criminal before a judge, pleading for mercy, and receiving it – and then asking for a blessing! But God’s love towards us is that great.

d. And cause His face to shine upon us: To have the glorious, happy face of God shining upon man is the greatest gift one could have. To know that as God looks upon you, He is well pleased – not because of who you are, or what you have done, but because you are in Jesus Christ – there is no greater source of peace and power in life.

i. “Why should he fret when God smiles? What matters though all the world should censure, if Jehovah countenances his servant. A look of approval from God creates a deep, delightful calm within the soul.” (Spurgeon)

e. Selah: The idea in the Hebrew for this word (occurring 74 times in the Old Testament) is for a pause. Most people think it speaks of a reflective pause, a pause to meditate on the words just spoken. It may also be a musical instruction, for a musical interlude of some kind.

i. Think about the greatness of God’s mercy, God’s blessing, and the approval of God’s shining face. “These three petitions include all that we need here or hereafter.” (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_67:2) The reason for blessing. That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations.

a. That Your way may be known on earth: The reason the Psalmist asks for this high and great blessing isn’t a selfish reason. He asks for this blessing for the sake of God’s glory, and for the sake of the perishing multitudes.

b. Your way: Not simply the truth of God, or the word of God to be published abroad – but for Your way, the way of the Lord, to be known on earth. This reminds us of the idea behind the great missionary passage of Mat_28:19-20 : Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Jesus didn't tell them only to evangelize and save souls, but to make disciples of all the nations, and to teach them to observe all thing that I have commanded you.

i. Of course, we need to know God's Word to walk in His way; but walking in His way is more than knowing His Word!

c. May be known on earth: The Psalmist has a beautiful scope in mind. Not just Jerusalem, not just Judea, not just all of Israel, not just all the Middle East, not just all the Mediterranean world, not just his continent or hemisphere, but all the earth! God wants us to have the same heart and the same vision – for all the earth!

d. Your salvation among all nations: Of all of the ways of God, this is the most precious and needful. We should see a perishing world and long for God's salvation among all nations.

i. Again, this is the reason for blessing. Are you a member of the “bless me” club? Always crying out to God, “Bless me, bless me, bless me!” But your cry is essentially a selfish one, the kind of cry a self-interested child makes. Yes, we unashamedly ask God to bless us – but not only for ourselves, but so His way will be made known on all the earth, and His salvation among all nations!

B. A call to praise God.

1. (Psa_67:3) A prayer to God for all peoples. Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.

a. Let the peoples praise You, O God: We notice that this is first and foremost a prayer to God. It is fine to call upon the peoples to praise God; but it is also fine to ask God to bring the nations to Himself. When we pray like this, we pray according to the heart of God, who desires that none perish but all come to repentance (2Pe_3:9), and who has ordained a great multitude from all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues to praise Him before His throne (Rev_7:9).

b. Let all the peoples praise You: If it wasn't big enough to pray Let the peoples praise You, the Psalmist takes it a step deeper: Let all the peoples praise You! We don't only want the earth to know God's way; we don't even want it to stop with the nations knowing His salvation. We want the all the peoples to praise Him! There is something wonderful about a lot of people praising God, and our walk with God is incomplete until we are praising Him.

i. Do we have the same heart? Or will we write off some peoples, instead of having God's heart for all the peoples?

2. (Psa_67:4-5) A joyful anticipation of the Kingdom of God. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy!

For You shall judge the people righteously, And govern the nations on earth. Selah Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.

a. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy! Why? Why should the nations be so happy? Because God is coming to judge the people righteously, and govern the nations on earth. Jesus is coming back, and it should make us even more excited about bringing the nations God's way, God's salvation, and God's praise.

i. God forbid that knowing that Jesus is coming soon should make us less passionate about evangelism and missions. It should make us more passionate!

b. Govern the nations on earth: It's a fact. It's going to happen. Jesus Christ is going to reign on planet earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We want to get the nations ready for it!

c. Selah: This is worthy of reflection - the connection between being passionate about the return of Jesus and a passion to spread the gospel.

d. Let the peoples praise You: The idea of Psa_67:3 is so important the Psalmist repeats it. "These words are no vain repetition, but are a chorus worthy to be sung again and again." (Spurgeon)

C. The answer to this prayer.

1. (Psa_67:6 a) Blessing for the earth.

Then the earth shall yield her increase;

a. Then the earth shall yield her increase: When the earth knows God's way, God's salvation, and God's praise, then she will yield her increase. The fruit will come forth, the appointed purpose for the earth will be fulfilled. Praise God!

b. Shall yield her increase: This also tells us that the earth will never yield her increase, find its fruitfulness and fulfillment, until she knows God's way, God's salvation, and God's praise.

2. (Psa_67:6-7 a) Blessing for the one who prayed. God, our own God, shall bless us.
God shall bless us,

a. God shall bless us: When we share God's heart and vision for the world, we will be blessed. We must be blessed. So we see a glorious circle. We are blessed; we use that blessing to pray for and reach a hurting world, and as that aligns us with the heart of God, we are blessed even more, so we use that blessing for all the earth, and it just goes on and on.

i. It's worth looking at our lives and seeing if we have broken the circle anywhere. Have we stopped believing that God blesses? Have we stopped seeking to extend that blessing? Have we stopped seeing God's heart in it all? If we don't break the circle, we really move from glory to glory!

b. God shall bless us: It is repeated twice – in a row – to emphasize the confident expectation.

3. (Psa_67:7 b) Conclusion: The answer to the prayer. And all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.

a. All the ends of the earth shall fear Him: God gets the respect, the honor, the praise, the glory, He is worthy of. We may never get respect; we may never face anything but hardship; we may end up poor and broken and persecuted and even laying down our lives – and be more blessed than ever, because God has used us in a great way.

(Psa 67:2) Then those living on earth will know what you are like;

all nations will know how you deliver your people.⁵

(Psa 67:3) Let the nations thank you, O God!
Let all the nations thank you!⁶

(Psa 67:4) Let foreigners⁷ rejoice and celebrate!
For you execute justice among the nations,
and govern the people living on earth.⁸ (Selah)

(Psa 67:5) Let the nations thank you, O God!
Let all the nations thank you!⁹

(Psa 67:6) The earth yields its crops.
May God, our God, bless us!

(Psa 67:7) May God bless us!¹⁰
Then all the ends of the earth will give him the honor he
deserves.¹¹

(Psa 68:1) Psalm 68¹

For the music director; by David, a psalm, a song.

God springs into action!²
His enemies scatter;
his adversaries³ run from him.⁴

(Psa 68:2) As smoke is driven away by the wind, so you drive
them away.⁵

As wax melts before fire,
so the wicked are destroyed before God.

(Psa 68:3) But the godly⁶ are happy;

they rejoice before God
and are overcome with joy.⁷

(Psa 68:4) Sing to God! Sing praises to his name!
Exalt the one who rides on the clouds!⁸
For the LORD is his name!⁹
Rejoice before him!

(Psa 68:5) He is a father to the fatherless and an advocate
for widows.¹⁰
God rules from his holy palace.¹¹

(Psa 68:6) God settles those who have been deserted in
their own homes;¹² he frees prisoners and grants them
prosperity.¹³
But sinful rebels live in the desert.¹⁴

(Psa 68:7) O God, when you lead your people into battle,¹⁵
when you march through the desert,¹⁶ (Selah)
(Psa 68:8) the earth shakes,
yes, the heavens pour down rain before God, the God of
Sinai,¹⁷ before God, the God of Israel.¹⁸

(Psa 68:9) O God, you cause abundant showers to fall¹⁹ on
your chosen people.²⁰
When they²¹ are tired, you sustain them,²²

(Psa 68:10) for you live among them.²³
You sustain the oppressed with your good blessings, O God.

(Psa 68:11) The Lord speaks;²⁴
many, many women spread the good news.²⁵

(Psa 68:12) Kings leading armies run away — they run
away!²⁶
The lovely lady²⁷ of the house divides up the loot.

(Psa 68:13) When²⁸ you lie down among the sheepfolds,²⁹
the wings of the dove are covered with silver and with
glittering gold.³⁰

(Psa 68:14) When the sovereign judge³¹ scatters kings,³²
let it snow³³ on Zalmon!

(Psa 68:15) The mountain of Bashan³⁴ is a towering
mountain;³⁵ the mountain of Bashan is a mountain with
many peaks.³⁶

(Psa 68:16) Why do you look with envy,³⁷ O mountains³⁸
with many peaks, at the mountain where God has decided to
live?³⁹
Indeed⁴⁰ the LORD will live there⁴¹ permanently!

(Psa 68:17) God has countless chariots;
they number in the thousands.⁴²
The Lord comes from Sinai in holy splendor.⁴³

(Psa 68:18) You ascend on high,⁴⁴
you have taken many captives.⁴⁵
You receive tribute⁴⁶ from⁴⁷ men, including even sinful
rebels.
Indeed the LORD God lives there!⁴⁸

(Psa 68:19) The Lord deserves praise!⁴⁹
Day after day⁵⁰ he carries our burden, the God who delivers
us. (Selah)

(Psa 68:20) Our God is a God who delivers;
the LORD, the sovereign Lord, can rescue from death.⁵¹

(Psa 68:21) Indeed God strikes the heads of his enemies,
the hairy foreheads of those who persist in rebellion.⁵²

(Psa 68:22) The Lord says,
“I will retrieve them⁵³ from Bashan,
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,

(Psa 68:23) so that your feet may stomp⁵⁴ in their blood,
and your dogs may eat their portion of the enemies’
corpses.”⁵⁵

(Psa 68:24) They⁵⁶ see your processions, O God —
the processions of my God, my king, who marches along in
holy splendor.⁵⁷

(Psa 68:25) Singers walk in front;
musicians follow playing their stringed instruments,⁵⁸ in the
midst of young women playing tambourines.⁵⁹

(Psa 68:26) In your large assemblies praise God, the LORD,
in the assemblies of Israel!⁶⁰

(Psa 68:27) There is little Benjamin, their ruler,⁶¹ and the
princes of Judah in their robes,⁶²
along with the princes of Zebulun and the princes of
Naphtali.

(Psa 68:28) God has decreed that you will be powerful.⁶³
O God, you who have acted on our behalf, demonstrate your
power,

(Psa 68:29) as you come out of your temple in Jerusalem!⁶⁴
Kings bring tribute to you.

(Psa 68:30) Sound your battle cry⁶⁵ against the wild beast
of the reeds,⁶⁶ and the nations that assemble like a herd of
calves led by bulls!⁶⁷
They humble themselves⁶⁸ and offer gold and silver as
tribute.⁶⁹

God⁷⁰ scatters⁷¹ the nations that like to do battle.

(Psa 68:31) They come with red cloth⁷² from Egypt,
Ethiopia⁷³ voluntarily offers tribute⁷⁴ to God.

(Psa 68:32) O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God!
Sing praises to the Lord, (Selah)

(Psa 68:33) to the one who rides through the sky from
ancient times!⁷⁵
Look! He thunders loudly.⁷⁶

(Psa 68:34) Acknowledge God's power,⁷⁷ his sovereignty
over Israel,
and the power he reveals in the skies!⁷⁸

(Psa 68:35) You are awe-inspiring, O God, as you emerge
from your holy temple!⁷⁹
It is the God of Israel⁸⁰ who gives the people power and
strength. God deserves praise!⁸¹
(Psa 69:1) Psalm 69¹

For the music director; according to the tune of "Lilies;"² by
David.

Deliver me, O God,
for the water has reached my neck.³

(Psa 69:2) I sink into the deep mire where there is no solid
ground;⁴
I am in⁵ deep water,
and the current overpowers me.

(Psa 69:3) I am exhausted from shouting for help;
my throat is sore;⁶
my eyes grow tired of looking for my God.⁷

(Psa 69:4) Those who hate me without cause are more numerous than the hairs of my head.

Those who want to destroy me, my enemies for no reason,8 outnumber me.9

They make me repay what I did not steal!10

(Psa 69:5) O God, you are aware of my foolish sins;11 my guilt is not hidden from you.12

(Psa 69:6) Let none who rely on you be disgraced because of me, O sovereign LORD and king!13

Let none who seek you be ashamed because of me,
O God of Israel!

(Psa 69:7) For I suffer14 humiliation for your sake15 and am thoroughly disgraced.16

(Psa 69:8) My own brothers treat me like a stranger;
they act as if I were a foreigner.17

(Psa 69:9) Certainly18 zeal for19 your house20 consumes me; I endure the insults of those who insult you.21

(Psa 69:10) I weep and refrain from eating food,22 which causes others to insult me.23

(Psa 69:11) I wear sackcloth and they ridicule me.24

(Psa 69:12) Those who sit at the city gate gossip about me; drunkards mock me in their songs.25

(Psa 69:13) O LORD, may you hear my prayer and be favorably disposed to me!26

O God, because of your great loyal love, answer me with your faithful deliverance!27

(Psa 69:14) Rescue me from the mud! Don't let me sink!
Deliver me²⁸ from those who hate me, from the deep water!

(Psa 69:15) Don't let the current overpower me!
Don't let the deep swallow me up! Don't let the pit²⁹ devour me!³⁰

(Psa 69:16) Answer me, O LORD, for your loyal love is good!³¹
Because of your great compassion, turn toward me!

(Psa 69:17) Do not ignore³² your servant,
for I am in trouble! Answer me right away!³³

(Psa 69:18) Come near me and redeem me!³⁴
Because of my enemies, rescue me!

(Psa 69:19) You know how I am insulted, humiliated and disgraced;
you can see all my enemies.³⁵

(Psa 69:20) Their insults are painful³⁶ and make me lose heart;³⁷
I look³⁸ for sympathy, but receive none,³⁹ for comforters,
but find none.

(Psa 69:21) They put bitter poison⁴⁰ into my food,
and to quench my thirst they give me vinegar to drink.⁴¹

(Psa 69:22) May their dining table become a trap before them!
May it be a snare for that group of friends!⁴²

(Psa 69:23) May their eyes be blinded!⁴³
Make them shake violently!⁴⁴

(Psa 69:24) Pour out your judgment⁴⁵ on them!
May your raging anger⁴⁶ overtake them!

(Psa 69:25) May their camp become desolate, their tents
uninhabited!⁴⁷

(Psa 69:26) For they harass⁴⁸ the one whom you
discipline;⁴⁹
they spread the news about the suffering of those whom you
punish.⁵⁰

(Psa 69:27) Hold them accountable for all their sins!⁵¹
Do not vindicate them!⁵²

(Psa 69:28) May their names be deleted from the scroll of
the living!⁵³
Do not let their names be listed with the godly!⁵⁴

(Psa 69:29) I am oppressed and suffering!
O God, deliver and protect me!⁵⁵

(Psa 69:30) I will sing praises to God's name!⁵⁶
I will magnify him as I give him thanks!⁵⁷

(Psa 69:31) That will please the LORD more than an ox or a
bull with horns and hooves.

(Psa 69:32) The oppressed look on — let them rejoice!
You who seek God,⁵⁸ may you be encouraged!⁵⁹

(Psa 69:33) For the LORD listens to the needy;
he does not despise his captive people.⁶⁰

(Psa 69:34) Let the heavens and the earth praise him,
along with the seas and everything that swims in them!

(Psa 69:35) For God will deliver Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah,
and his people⁶¹ will again live in them and possess Zion.⁶²

(Psa 69:36) The descendants of his servants will inherit it,
and those who are loyal to him⁶³ will live in it.⁶⁴

(Psa 70:1) Psalm 70

For the music director; by David; written to get God's attention.²

O God, please be willing to rescue me!³
O LORD, hurry and help me!⁴

(Psa 70:2) May those who are trying to take my life be
embarrassed and ashamed!⁵
May those who want to harm me
be turned back and ashamed!⁶

(Psa 70:3) May those who say, "Aha! Aha!" be driven back⁷
and disgraced!⁸

(Psa 70:4) May all those who seek you be happy and rejoice
in you!
May those who love to experience⁹ your deliverance say
continually,¹⁰ "May God¹¹ be praised!"¹²

(Psa 70:5) I am oppressed and needy!¹³
O God, hurry to me!¹⁴
You are my helper and my deliverer! O LORD,¹⁵ do not
delay!
(Psa 71:1) Psalm 71

In you, O LORD, I have taken shelter! Never let me be
humiliated!

(Psa 71:2) Vindicate me by rescuing me!²
Listen to me!³ Deliver me!⁴

(Psa 71:3) Be my protector and refuge,⁵
a stronghold where I can be safe!⁶
For you are my high ridge⁷ and my stronghold.

(Psa 71:4) My God, rescue me from the power⁸ of the
wicked, from the hand of the cruel oppressor!

(Psa 71:5) For you give me confidence,⁹ O Lord;
O LORD, I have trusted in you since I was young.¹⁰

(Psa 71:6) I have leaned on you since birth;¹¹
you pulled me¹² from my mother's womb. I praise you
continually.¹³

(Psa 71:7) Many are appalled when they see me,¹⁴ but you
are my secure shelter.

(Psa 71:8) I praise you constantly
and speak of your splendor all day long.¹⁵

(Psa 71:9) Do not reject me in my old age!¹⁶
When my strength fails, do not abandon me!

(Psa 71:10) For my enemies talk about me;
those waiting for a chance to kill me plot my demise.¹⁷

(Psa 71:11) They say,¹⁸ "God has abandoned him.
Run and seize him, for there is no one who will rescue him!"

(Psa 71:12) O God, do not remain far away from me!
My God, hurry and help me!¹⁹

(Psa 71:13) May my accusers be humiliated and defeated!

May those who want to harm me²⁰ be covered with scorn and disgrace!

(Psa 71:14) As for me, I will wait continually, and will continue to praise you.²¹

(Psa 71:15) I will tell about your justice, and all day long proclaim your salvation,²² though I cannot fathom its full extent.²³

(Psa 71:16) I will come and tell about²⁴ the mighty acts of the sovereign LORD.
I will proclaim your justice — yours alone.

(Psa 71:17) O God, you have taught me since I was young, and I am still declaring²⁵ your amazing deeds.

(Psa 71:18) Even when I am old and gray,²⁶
O God, do not abandon me,
until I tell the next generation about your strength, and those coming after me about your power.²⁷

(Psa 71:19) Your justice, O God, extends to the skies above;²⁸ you have done great things.²⁹
O God, who can compare to you?³⁰

(Psa 71:20) Though you have allowed me to experience much trouble and distress,³¹ revive me once again!³²
Bring me up once again³³ from the depths of the earth!

(Psa 71:21) Raise me to a position of great honor!³⁴
Turn and comfort me!³⁵

(Psa 71:22) I will express my thanks to you with a stringed instrument, praising³⁶ your faithfulness, O my God!
I will sing praises to you accompanied by a harp,
O Holy One of Israel!³⁷

(Psa 71:23) My lips will shout for joy! Yes,³⁸ I will sing your praises!

I will praise you when you rescue me!³⁹

(Psa 71:24) All day long my tongue will also tell about your justice,
for those who want to harm me⁴⁰ will be embarrassed and ashamed.⁴¹

(Psa 72:1) Psalm 72

For² Solomon.

O God, grant the king the ability to make just decisions!³
Grant the king's son⁴ the ability to make fair decisions!⁵

(Psa 72:2) Then he will judge⁶ your people fairly, and your oppressed ones⁷ equitably.

(Psa 72:3) The mountains will bring news of peace to the people, and the hills will announce justice.⁸

(Psa 72:4) He will defend⁹ the oppressed among the people; he will deliver¹⁰ the children¹¹ of the poor and crush the oppressor.

(Psa 72:5) People will fear¹² you¹³ as long as the sun and moon remain in the sky, for generation after generation.¹⁴

(Psa 72:6) He¹⁵ will descend like rain on the mown grass,¹⁶ like showers that drench¹⁷ the earth.¹⁸

(Psa 72:7) During his days the godly will flourish;¹⁹ peace will prevail as long as the moon remains in the sky.²⁰

(Psa 72:8) May he rule²¹ from sea to sea,²²

and from the Euphrates River²³ to the ends of the earth!

(Psa 72:9) Before him the coastlands²⁴ will bow down, and his enemies will lick the dust.²⁵

(Psa 72:10) The kings of Tarshish²⁶ and the coastlands will offer gifts; the kings of Sheba²⁷ and Seba²⁸ will bring tribute.

(Psa 72:11) All kings will bow down to him; all nations will serve him.

(Psa 72:12) For he will rescue the needy²⁹ when they cry out for help, and the oppressed³⁰ who have no defender.

(Psa 72:13) He will take pity³¹ on the poor and needy; the lives of the needy he will save.

(Psa 72:14) From harm and violence he will defend them;³² he will value their lives.³³

(Psa 72:15) May he live!³⁴ May they offer him gold from Sheba!³⁵
May they continually pray for him!
May they pronounce blessings on him all day long!³⁶

(Psa 72:16) May there be³⁷ an abundance³⁸ of grain in the earth;
on the tops³⁹ of the mountains may it⁴⁰ sway!⁴¹
May its⁴² fruit trees⁴³ flourish⁴⁴ like the forests of Lebanon!⁴⁵
May its crops⁴⁶ be as abundant⁴⁷ as the grass of the earth!⁴⁸

(Psa 72:17) May his fame endure!⁴⁹

May his dynasty last as long as the sun remains in the sky!⁵⁰

May they use his name when they formulate their blessings!⁵¹

May all nations consider him to be favored by God!⁵²

(Psa 72:18) The LORD God, the God of Israel, deserves praise!⁵³

He alone accomplishes amazing things!⁵⁴

(Psa 72:19) His glorious name deserves praise⁵⁵ forevermore!

May his majestic splendor⁵⁶ fill the whole earth! We agree! We agree!⁵⁷

(Psa 72:20) This collection of the prayers of David son of Jesse ends here.⁵⁸

(Psa 73:1) Book 3 (Psalms 73 — 89)

Psalm 73¹

A psalm by Asaph.

Certainly God is good to Israel,²
and to those whose motives are pure!³

(Guzik)

Psa 73:1-28

Psalms 73 – “My Feet Almost Slipped”

This wonderful psalm may be best understood by the dominate pronouns within. When Asaph is troubled by the fate of the ungodly (Psa_73:1-12) the dominate pronoun is they. When he describes his own frustrated thinking leading to the resolution (Psa_73:13-17) the dominate pronoun is I.

When he finds resolution of the problem (Psa_73:18-22) the dominate pronoun is You, in the sense of God. When He proclaims the assurance of his faith and fellowship with God (Psa_73:23-28) the dominate pronouns are a mixture of You and I.

A. The Problem Presented.

1. (Psa_73:1-3) The contradiction between the goodness of God and the prosperity of the wicked. Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart.

But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped.

For I was envious of the boastful,

When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

a. Truly God is good to Israel: Asaph began this psalm with a simple declaration of the goodness of God to His people. By this he indicated that he understood not only that God was good, but that He actively showed that goodness to Israel and to the pure in heart.

i. Asaph was an organizer and leader for the temple choirs in the days of David, and presumably for Solomon after him. He was one who “prophesied according to the order of the king” (1Ch_25:1-2).”

ii. “The writer does not doubt this, but lays it down as his firm conviction. It is well to make sure of what we do know, for this will be good anchor-hold for us when we are molested by those mysterious storms which arise from things which we do not understand.” (Spurgeon)

b. But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled: Asaph knew what he said about God in the first verse was true; yet there

was another truth that disturbed him greatly. It made him almost stumble; it made his steps nearly slip.

i. “It shows that having doubts like Asaph’s is not incompatible with responsible Christian living. It may have been true, as he says, that his feet ‘had almost slipped.’ But they had not actually slipped, or at least they had not slipped so far as to make him forget his responsibilities as a leader of God’s people.” (Boice) c. For I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked: This was the second truth that seemed to contract what Asaph knew of God as declared in the first verse. He knew that God was good to Israel and to the pure in heart, but it also seemed that God was good to the boastful and to the wicked. It all seemed so unfair to Asaph, and thus made him almost stumble and slip.

i. Asaph saw the same troubling evidence that many see everyday in their own life. Many people cannot deny that God is good to them; but it also seems that God is good – perhaps too good – to the boastful and the wicked. It is then easy to envy the wicked and their prosperity.

ii. Such deep questions cause one to question the moral order of the universe. After all, one asks, what good is there in being good? If the wicked enjoy the same prosperity as the pure in heart, then what is the reward of godliness?

iii. “If God is in control of things, the plans of the wicked should flounder. They should even be punished openly. The godly alone should prosper. But that is not what Asaph saw, and it is not what we see either. We see scoundrels getting rich. Utterly degenerate persons, like particularly vile rock musicians or movie stars, are well paid and sought after. Even criminals get rich selling their crime stories.” (Boice)

iv. "The faith in which he had been reared and to which he clung made his difficulties in this respect only the greater. He had been taught that the good always prosper and that the wicked always go to the wall." (Chappell) We could say that this was the same faith believed so strongly by Job's friends; the same faith that prompted the question of the disciples, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (Joh_9:2)

v. "It is a pitiful thing that an heir of heaven should have to confess 'I was envious,' but worse still that he should have to put it, 'I was envious at the foolish.'" (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_73:4-9) The good life of the wicked. For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm.

They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them like a garment. Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish.

They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression; They speak loftily.

They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth.

a. For there are no pangs in their death: Perhaps Asaph had seen some of the wicked die agonizing and painful deaths; but he had seen enough wicked people die peaceful deaths to make him say, "there are no pangs in their death."

i. "Men may die like lambs and yet have their place for ever with the goats." (Matthew Henry, cited in Spurgeon)

ii. " 'He fell asleep like a child,' say his friends; and others exclaim, 'He was so happy, that he must be a saint.' Ah! This is but their apparent end. God knoweth that the dying repose of sinners is but the awful calm which heralds the eternal hurricane." (Spurgeon) b. They are not in trouble as other men, nor are the plagued as other men: Here Asaph

developed his argument even further. Not only are the wicked rewarded equally to the righteous, they seem to be more blessed than the pure in heart. Their lives seem to have less trouble and are not as plagued as the average man.

i. “While many saints are poor and afflicted, the prosperous sinner is neither. He is worse than other men, and yet he is better off; he ploughs least, and yet has the most fodder. He deserves the hottest hell, and yet has the warmest nest.” (Spurgeon)

c. Therefore pride serves as their necklace: In Asaph’s analysis, because God did not punish the wicked as He should, they simply became more wicked, and even wore their pride as a prominent necklace. They therefore became more violent, greedy, and more likely to scoff and blaspheme.

i. “Chains of gold, and golden rings, were ensigns of magistracy and civil power. As these chains encompassed their necks, or the rings their wrists and fingers, as the signs of the offices in virtue of which they acted; so violence, oppressive conduct, encompassed them.” (Clarke)

ii. We appreciate the poetic power of Asaph’s description. We see the wicked man with an ostentatious necklace of pride. He is covered with an impressive garment, but that covering is violence towards others. He is so filled with good food that his eyes bulge with abundance, and he has more than heart could wish. His mouth always scoffs and speaks wickedly, and his mouth is set ... against the heavens. Worst of all, everyone seems to hear about this wicked man and his prosperity, because it seems as if his tongue walks through the earth.

iii. “The whole passage is a masterly picture of these darlings of fortune: overblown, overweening; laughable if

they were not so ruthless; their vanity egging them on to hector the very universe.” (Kidner)

iv. Together with Asaph, we picture these rich, famous, proud, showy, violent, greedy, foul-speaking gangsters strutting about enjoying their wickedness. We are as troubled by their prosperity and the seeming indifference of God toward them as he was.

v. Their eyes bulge with abundance: “By fatness, or corpulency, the natural lines of the face are changed, or rather obliterated. The characteristic distinctions are gone; and we see little remaining besides the human hog.” (Clarke)

3. (Psa_73:10-14) The doubts of the godly. Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full cup are drained by them.

And they say, “How does God know?

And is there knowledge in the Most High?” Behold, these are the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase in riches.

Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain,

And washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.

a. Therefore his people return here: This wicked man has associates who are just like him, and they take and take just as he does (waters of a full cup are drained by them).

i. This is a difficult verse to translate and fit into the context. “Most modern versions find here the popular worship of success.” (Kidner)

b. They say, “How does God know?” In the previous verses Asaph told us that the wicked man sets his mouth against heaven. Here, he tells us what the wicked man and his associates say against heaven. They claim that God is blind

or ignorant; that therefore they can do as they please and God is unable to do anything against them.

c. Behold, these are the ungodly: In his frustration, Asaph saw the ungodly life as the good life. They are always at ease; they always increase in riches. They are rewarded for their wickedness by a God who seems to be as unknowing as the wicked say that He is.

d. Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain: The frustration kept building for Asaph. He felt that it was vain for him to be pure in heart, vain for him to have clean hands before God, vain for him to be innocent.

i. "Poor Asaph! He questions the value of holiness when its wages are paid in the coin of affliction." (Spurgeon)

e. For all day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning: Asaph felt that his life was much more difficult than the life of the ungodly man. While the wicked man enjoyed all his wealth and ease and pride, Asaph had to endure being plagued and chastened, and he had to endure it all day long and every morning.

i. Plagued is bad, yet one might assign a plague to anonymous and natural causes. Chastened is even worse, because it implies that God Himself was afflicting Asaph with the difficulties. God was easy on the wicked and hard on Asaph.

ii. As we would expect in a poetic outpouring, Asaph was exaggerating. The life of the wicked was not as good as he observed, nor was his life as bad as he felt it to be. Yet one cannot deny or contradict the feeling that prompted Asaph in this psalm, and we can instead strongly identify with that feeling.

B. The Problem Understood.

1. (Psa_73:15-17) The power of a new perspective. If I had said, "I will speak thus,"

Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children. When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me;

Until I went into the sanctuary of God;

Then I understood their end.

a. If I had said, "I will speak thus": Asaph caught himself from sliding further into despair over the perceived prosperity of the wicked. He did not want to be untrue to the generation of Your children, in the sense that he did not want to promote this sense of injustice and despair that he felt.

b. When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me: Asaph was caught in a trap. He could not deny the evidence that said that the wicked and ungodly often have good lives. He could not deny that his own life was often hard, leaving him feeling plagued and chastened by God. He felt all this to be true, but he also felt he could not talk about it because it would be untrue to others. Therefore, it was all too painful for him.

c. Until I went into the sanctuary of God: The crisis seemed to build and build for Asaph, until he went into the House of the Lord. There he gained a perspective on his problem that he did not have before. There he was able to see things from an eternal viewpoint, and he then understood their end.

i. "What then did the psalmist do? The answer to some will seem perfectly childish. He went to church... . Just what

others got out of this service we are not told. But the psalmist came into possession of certain gripping convictions that steadied him and enabled him to walk in the after days with firmness and assurance.” (Chappell)

ii. What did going to the House of God do for Asaph? There, he could gain understanding in several ways.

- By prayer and worship in the sanctuary, he understood that God was at the center of all things, and he gained a fresh appreciation of both God and eternity.

- By hearing the word of God in the sanctuary, he understood that there was a truth that went beyond what he saw and experienced in everyday life.

- By observing sacrifice at the sanctuary, he understood that God takes sin so seriously that it must be judged and atoned for, even if it is by an innocent victim who stands in the place of the guilty by faith.

iii. This is one of God’s great purposes in establishing a place where His people come to meet with Him. It is never to imply that there is only one or only a few places where man can meet with God, or that they must be ornate or glorious buildings. It is to emphasize that it is good to have a place separate from other places where we focus on a heavenly, eternal perspective.

iv. For Asaph, this was the sanctuary of God. It was the temple in Jerusalem, or the tabernacle that existed before the temple. For us, it is the place where we meet with God’s people for worship and fellowship and hearing the Word of God.

v. When Asaph went to the sanctuary of God, he received understanding. It wasn’t only a place to impact the senses

and the feelings, but the understanding of a man. Asaph didn't remark on how he felt their end or even experienced their end; he understood their end. It isn't a bad thing to feel and experience the right things in the House of God, but there must also be understanding; the communication of truth in ways that can be received.

vi. When Asaph went to the sanctuary of God, it only did him good because he connected with eternity, something that made him understand the end of the wicked. He didn't need to go to the house of God to hear about the news of the day and the same talk one would hear in the marketplace or the business office. Asaph needed the ultimate relevance, the relevance of eternity.

vii. "Their end is literally 'their afterward', their future which will unmake everything they have lived for." (Kidner)

2. (Psa_73:18-20) The unsafe place of the wicked. Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.

Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.

As a dream when one awakes, So, Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their image.

a. Surely You set them in slippery places: This is part of the understanding Asaph gained in the House of the Lord. He understood that the ease and security of the wicked was really only an illusion, and they were actually set ... in slippery places, ready to fall at any time.

i. Earlier in the psalm Asaph worried that his feet had almost slipped (Psa_73:2). Now, with a perspective gained from the House of the Lord, he sees that the wicked are the ones in slippery places.

ii. "Sinner you may fall now, at once. The mountain yields beneath your feet, the slippery ice is melting every moment. Look down and learn your speedy doom. Yonder yawning gulf must soon receive you, while we look after you with hopeless tears. Our prayers cannot follow you; from your slippery standing place you fall and you are gone for ever. Death makes the place where you stand slippery, for it dissolves your life every hour. Time makes it slippery, for every instant it cuts the ground from under your feet. The vanities which you enjoy make your place slippery, for they are all like ice which shall melt before the sun. You have no foot-hold, sinner, you have no sure hope, no confidence. It is a melting thing you trust to." (Spurgeon)

b. Oh, how they are brought down to desolation, as in a moment! Asaph could only understand this with the eternal perspective brought to him at the house of the Lord. In daily life he could only see what worked good for the wicked; with an eternal perspective he saw their destruction, their desolation, their terrors.

i. Earlier in the psalm we had the feeling that Asaph would gladly trade places with the wicked man who seemed to be blessed. After gaining this eternal perspective, we understand that Asaph would never trade places with them. Who wants destruction, desolation, and terrors?

c. As a dream when one awakes: With an eternal perspective from the House of God, Asaph understood that the good life of the ungodly is really as fragile as a dream, and they will soon wake to the reality of the destruction, desolation, and terrors that is their portion.

i. "Their happiness is like that in a dream, wherein a man seems to be highly pleased and transported with ravishing delights, but when he awakes he finds himself deceived and unsatisfied." (Poole)

ii. "Let them flaunt their little hour, poor unsubstantial sons of dreams; they will soon be gone; when the day breaketh, and the Lord awakes as a mighty man out of his sleep, they will vanish away. Who cares for the wealth of dreamland? Who indeed but fools?" (Spurgeon)

d. So, Lord, when You awake: Asaph admitted that it seemed as if God was asleep because one could not always see His active hand of judgment against the wicked. Using this idea, Asaph knew that God would not always sleep in His forbearance toward the wicked, and one day He would awake and judge them; He would despise their image.

3. (Psa_73:21-24) Confessing foolishness and receiving guidance. Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind.

I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You. Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand.

You will guide me with Your counsel,

And afterward receive me to glory.

a. Thus my heart was grieved ... I was so foolish and ignorant: Asaph confessed before the Lord his sinful lack of understanding before he went into the House of the Lord. He felt foolish that he had forgotten the obvious truths of eternity and God's justice.

b. I was like a beast before You: Asaph rightly observed that animals seem to have no concept of eternity. They live their life for momentary pleasures, satisfying natural urges. When Asaph forgot about eternity he was truly like a beast before God.

i. "Hebrew, beasts, which may signify a great beast; a most stupid and sottish creature, like one not only void of grace,

but of reason too... . I minded only present things, as the brutes do.” (Poole)

ii. “As the grass-eating ox has but this present life, and can only estimate things thereby, and by the sensual pleasure which they afford, even so had the Psalmist judged happiness by this mortal life, by outward appearances, and by fleshly enjoyments.” (Spurgeon)

iii. “This was as far as Job got in his struggles with Asaph’s question. For when God finished interrogating Job, Job confessed that God’s ways were entirely beyond his understanding, and he despised his pride and repented.” (Boice)

c. Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand: Asaph here declared both that he was with God, and that God was with him. It wasn’t enough for Asaph to know and to say that God was with him; he also had to confess that he was with God.

d. You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory: With the new perspective gained at the House of the Lord, Asaph knew that God would guide him in this life and ultimately receive him to glory.

i. Significantly, Asaph expected God to guide him with counsel. He expected to hear God’s wisdom and receive guidance through it. He didn’t expect to be guided primarily through feelings, circumstances, or experiences, but to be guided through counsel.

ii. Asaph had the faithful expectation of an afterward of glory. This is a deliberate contrast with the end of the wicked mentioned in Psa_73:17. As a godly man, Asaph has his afterward and the wicked will have quiet another.

4. (Psa_73:25-28) The glory of a heavenly hope. Whom have I in heaven but You?

And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.

But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, That I may declare all Your works.

a. Whom have I in heaven but You? This is the beautiful expression of a longing heart for God and for eternity. Intellectually, Asaph probably understood that there was much for him in heaven. There were angels and dwelling places and streets of gold and the companionship of the people of God throughout all generations. Yet all of that paled in the light of the presence of God.

i. "There is none in heaven, with all its stars and angels, enough for thee but Him." (Maclaren)

ii. "Let sinners have an earthly prosperity, I am satisfied with thee, and with thy favour. Since thou givest me support and conduct here, and carriest me safe from hence to eternal glory, what do I need more? Or what can I desire more?" (Poole)

iii. "Verse 25 is a particularly fine expression and has been a blessing to many over the ages. Charles Wesley (1707-1788), the great Methodist hymn writer, was thinking about it on his deathbed and actually composed a hymn based on it as his final testimony. Calling his wife to him, he dictated:" (Boice) "In age and feebleness extreme, What shall a sinful worm redeem? Jesus, my only hope thou art, Strength of my failing flesh and heart;

O, could I catch a smile from thee, And drop into eternity."

b. And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You: For Asaph, God was not only a heavenly hope but an earthly

desire as well. God was both his inheritance in heaven and his earthly desire.

c. My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever: Asaph recognized both his weakness and the strength of God, and the enduring character of God's strength.

i. "In ancient Israel the priests enjoyed a privileged status of having the Lord as their 'share' and 'inheritance' (Num_18:20). Though they were denied the privilege of land ownership, they, along with the Levites, were taken care of by the Lord's tithes and offerings." (VanGemren)

ii. "Allusion is here made to the division of the promised land. I ask no inheritance below; I look for one above." (Clarke)

d. Indeed, those who are far from You shall perish: Asaph no longer had doubts about the destiny of the ungodly. With the eternal perspective gained at the House of the Lord, he understood that they would indeed perish.

i. "No human spirit that is not united to God can be saved. Those who are FAR FROM THEE shall perish-they shall be lost, undone, ruined; and that without remedy. Being separated from God by sin, they shall never be rejoined; the great gulf must be between them and their Maker eternally." (Clarke)

e. It is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all Your works: It is staggering to see how much good Asaph's visit to the House of the Lord did for him. It gave him understanding and an eternal perspective.

i. He saw the great benefit in drawing near to God, which he doubted before (Psa_73:13). "It may seem good in the worldling's eyes to go his way to his wine cups, and to make

merry in the dance; it may seem good to yonder truster in an arm of flesh, to seek out his friends and his kinsmen, and entrust his case to their discretion; it may seem good to the desponding to retire in melancholy to brood over his sorrows, and to the dissipated, to endeavor to drown all care in vanity, but to me, says the psalmist, it is good, preeminently good, that I should draw near unto God.” (Spurgeon)

ii. He saw the value of putting his trust in God, now understanding that God was reliable and could be trusted.

iii. He had a passion to declare all God’s works. He would become a messenger of God’s goodness and of the eternal perspective he gained in the House of the Lord.

(Psa 73:2) But as for me, my feet almost slipped;
my feet almost slid out from under me.⁴

(Psa 73:3) For I envied those who are proud,
as I observed⁵ the prosperity⁶ of the wicked.

(Psa 73:4) For they suffer no pain;⁷
their bodies⁸ are strong and well-fed.⁹

(Psa 73:5) They are immune to the trouble common to men;
they do not suffer as other men do.¹⁰

(Psa 73:6) Arrogance is their necklace,¹¹ and violence their
clothing.¹²

(Psa 73:7) Their prosperity causes them to do wrong;¹³ their
thoughts are sinful.¹⁴

(Psa 73:8) They mock¹⁵ and say evil things;¹⁶ they proudly
threaten violence.¹⁷

(Psa 73:9) They speak as if they rule in heaven, and lay claim to the earth.¹⁸

(Psa 73:10) Therefore they have more than enough food to eat, and even suck up the water of the sea.¹⁹

(Psa 73:11) They say, “How does God know what we do? Is the sovereign one aware of what goes on?”²⁰

(Psa 73:12) Take a good look! This is what the wicked are like,²¹ those who always have it so easy and get richer and richer.²²

(Psa 73:13) I concluded,²³ “Surely in vain I have kept my motives²⁴ pure and maintained a pure lifestyle.²⁵

(Psa 73:14) I suffer all day long,
and am punished every morning.”

(Psa 73:15) If I had publicized these thoughts,²⁶
I would have betrayed your loyal followers.²⁷

(Psa 73:16) When I tried to make sense of this, it was troubling to me.²⁸

(Psa 73:17) Then I entered the precincts of God’s temple,²⁹
and understood the destiny of the wicked.³⁰

(Psa 73:18) Surely³¹ you put them in slippery places;
you bring them down³² to ruin.

(Psa 73:19) How desolate they become in a mere moment!
Terrifying judgments make their demise complete!³³

(Psa 73:20) They are like a dream after one wakes up.³⁴
O Lord, when you awake³⁵ you will despise them.³⁶

(Psa 73:21) Yes,³⁷ my spirit was bitter,³⁸ and my insides felt sharp pain.³⁹

(Psa 73:22) I was ignorant⁴⁰ and lacked insight;⁴¹
I was as senseless as an animal before you.⁴²

(Psa 73:23) But I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.

(Psa 73:24) You guide⁴³ me by your wise advice,
and then you will lead me to a position of honor.⁴⁴

(Psa 73:25) Whom do I have in heaven but you?
I desire no one but you on earth.⁴⁵

(Psa 73:26) My flesh and my heart may grow weak,⁴⁶
but God always⁴⁷ protects my heart and gives me stability.⁴⁸

(Psa 73:27) Yes,⁴⁹ look! Those far from you⁵⁰ die;
you destroy everyone who is unfaithful to you.⁵¹

(Psa 73:28) But as for me, God's presence is all I need.⁵²
I have made the sovereign LORD my shelter, as⁵³ I declare
all the things you have done.

(Psa 74:1) Psalm 74¹

A well-written song² by Asaph.

Why, O God, have you permanently rejected us?³
Why does your anger burn⁴ against the sheep of your
pasture?

(Psa 74:2) Remember your people⁵ whom you acquired in
ancient times, whom you rescued⁶ so they could be your
very own nation,⁷

as well as Mount Zion, where you dwell!

(Psa 74:3) Hurry and look⁸ at the permanent ruins,
and all the damage the enemy has done to the temple!⁹

(Psa 74:4) Your enemies roar¹⁰ in the middle of your
sanctuary;¹¹ they set up their battle flags.¹²

(Psa 74:5) They invade like lumberjacks swinging their axes
in a thick forest.¹³

(Psa 74:6) And now¹⁴ they are tearing down¹⁵ all its
engravings¹⁶ with axes¹⁷ and crowbars.¹⁸

(Psa 74:7) They set your sanctuary on fire;
they desecrate your dwelling place by knocking it to the
ground.¹⁹

(Psa 74:8) They say to themselves,²⁰ “We will oppress all of
them.”²¹
They burn down all the places where people worship God in
the land.²²

(Psa 74:9) We do not see any signs of God’s presence;²³
there are no longer any prophets²⁴
and we have no one to tell us how long this will last.²⁵

(Psa 74:10) How long, O God, will the adversary hurl insults?
Will the enemy blaspheme your name forever?

(Psa 74:11) Why do you remain inactive?
Intervene and destroy him!²⁶

(Psa 74:12) But God has been my²⁷ king from ancient
times, performing acts of deliverance on the earth.²⁸

(Psa 74:13) You destroyed²⁹ the sea by your strength;
you shattered the heads of the sea monster³⁰ in the water.

(Psa 74:14) You crushed the heads of Leviathan;³¹
you fed³² him to the people who live along the coast.³³

(Psa 74:15) You broke open the spring and the stream;³⁴
you dried up perpetually flowing rivers.³⁵

(Psa 74:16) You established the cycle of day and night;³⁶
you put the moon³⁷ and sun in place.³⁸

(Psa 74:17) You set up all the boundaries³⁹ of the earth;
you created the cycle of summer and winter.⁴⁰

(Psa 74:18) Remember how⁴¹ the enemy hurls insults, O
LORD,⁴² and how a foolish nation blasphemes your name!

(Psa 74:19) Do not hand the life of your dove⁴³ over to a
wild animal!
Do not continue to disregard⁴⁴ the lives of your oppressed
people!

(Psa 74:20) Remember your covenant promises,⁴⁵
for the dark regions of the earth are full of places where
violence rules.⁴⁶

(Psa 74:21) Do not let the afflicted be turned back in shame!
Let the oppressed and poor praise your name!⁴⁷

(Psa 74:22) Rise up, O God! Defend your honor!⁴⁸
Remember how fools insult you all day long!⁴⁹

(Psa 74:23) Do not disregard⁵⁰ what your enemies say,⁵¹ or
the unceasing shouts of those who defy you.⁵²

(Psa 75:1) Psalm 75¹

For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style;²
a psalm of Asaph; a song.

We give thanks to you, O God! We give thanks! You reveal
your presence;³
people tell about your amazing deeds.

(Psa 75:2) God says,⁴
“At the appointed times,⁵
I judge⁶ fairly.

(Psa 75:3) When the earth and all its inhabitants dissolve in
fear,⁷
I make its pillars secure.”⁸ (Selah)

(Psa 75:4) ⁹ I say to the proud, “Do not be proud,”
and to the wicked, “Do not be so confident of victory!”¹⁰

(Psa 75:5) Do not be so certain you have won!¹¹
Do not speak with your head held so high!¹²

(Psa 75:6) For victory does not come from the east or west,
or from the wilderness.¹³

(Psa 75:7) For God is the judge!¹⁴
He brings one down and exalts another.¹⁵

(Psa 75:8) For the LORD holds in his hand a cup full of
foaming wine mixed with spices,¹⁶
and pours it out.¹⁷
Surely all the wicked of the earth
will slurp it up and drink it to its very last drop.”¹⁸

(Psa 75:9) As for me, I will continually tell what you have
done;¹⁹

I will sing praises to the God of Jacob!

(Psa 75:10) God says,²⁰

“I will bring down all the power of the wicked;
the godly will be victorious.”²¹

(Psa 76:1) Psalm 76

For the music director; to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm of Asaph, a song.

God has revealed himself in Judah;² in Israel his reputation³ is great.

(Psa 76:2) He lives in Salem;⁴ he dwells in Zion.⁵

(Psa 76:3) There he shattered the arrows,⁶
the shield, the sword, and the rest of the weapons of war.⁷
(Selah)

(Psa 76:4) You shine brightly and reveal your majesty,
as you descend from the hills where you killed your prey.⁸

(Psa 76:5) The bravehearted⁹ were plundered;¹⁰ they “fell asleep.”¹¹
All the warriors were helpless.¹²

(Psa 76:6) At the sound of your battle cry,¹³ O God of Jacob,
both rider¹⁴ and horse “fell asleep.”¹⁵

(Psa 76:7) You are awesome! Yes, you!
Who can withstand your intense anger?¹⁶

(Psa 76:8) From heaven you announced what their
punishment would be.¹⁷
The earth¹⁸ was afraid and silent

(Psa 76:9) when God arose to execute judgment,
and to deliver all the oppressed of the earth. (Selah)

(Psa 76:10) Certainly¹⁹ your angry judgment upon men will
bring you praise;²⁰ you reveal your anger in full measure.²¹

(Psa 76:11) Make vows to the LORD your God and repay
them!

Let all those who surround him²² bring tribute to the
awesome one!

(Psa 76:12) He humbles princes;²³
the kings of the earth regard him as awesome.²⁴

(Psa 77:1) Psalm 77

For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of Asaph.

I will cry out to God² and call for help!
I will cry out to God and he will pay attention³ to me.

(Psa 77:2) In my time of trouble I sought⁴ the Lord.
I kept my hand raised in prayer throughout the night.⁵
I⁶ refused to be comforted.

(Psa 77:3) I said, "I will remember God while I groan;
I will think about him while my strength leaves me."⁷
(Selah)

(Psa 77:4) You held my eyelids open;⁸
I was troubled and could not speak.⁹

(Psa 77:5) I thought about the days of old, about ancient
times.¹⁰

(Psa 77:6) I said, "During the night I will remember the song
I once sang; I will think very carefully."

I tried to make sense of what was happening.¹¹

(Psa 77:7) I asked,¹² “Will the Lord reject me forever?
Will he never again show me his favor?

(Psa 77:8) Has his loyal love disappeared forever?
Has his promise¹³ failed forever?

(Psa 77:9) Has God forgotten to be merciful?
Has his anger stifled his compassion?”

(Psa 77:10) Then I said, “I am sickened by the thought
that the sovereign One¹⁴ might become inactive.¹⁵

(Psa 77:11) I will remember the works of the LORD.
Yes, I will remember the amazing things you did long ago!¹⁶

(Psa 77:12) I will think about all you have done; I will reflect
upon your deeds!”

(Psa 77:13) ¹⁷ O God, your deeds are extraordinary!¹⁸
What god can compare to our great God?¹⁹

(Psa 77:14) You are the God who does amazing things;
you have revealed your strength among the nations.

(Psa 77:15) You delivered²⁰ your people by your strength²¹
—
the children of Jacob and Joseph. (Selah)

(Psa 77:16) The waters²² saw you, O God, the waters saw
you and trembled.²³

Yes, the depths of the sea²⁴ shook with fear.²⁵

(Psa 77:17) The clouds poured down rain;²⁶ the skies
thundered.²⁷

Yes, your arrows²⁸ flashed about.

(Psa 77:18) Your thunderous voice was heard in the wind;
the lightning bolts lit up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.²⁹

(Psa 77:19) You walked through the sea;³⁰
you passed through the surging waters,³¹ but left no
footprints.³²

(Psa 77:20) You led your people like a flock of sheep, by the
hand of Moses and Aaron.

(Psa 78:1) Psalm 78¹

A well-written song² by Asaph.

Pay attention, my people, to my instruction! Listen to the
words I speak!³

(Psa 78:2) I will sing a song that imparts wisdom;
I will make insightful observations about the past.⁴

(Psa 78:3) What we have heard and learned⁵ —
that which our ancestors⁶ have told us —

(Psa 78:4) we will not hide from their⁷ descendants.
We will tell the next generation
about the LORD's praiseworthy acts,⁸
about his strength and the amazing things he has done.

(Psa 78:5) He established a rule⁹ in Jacob;
he set up a law in Israel.

He commanded our ancestors
to make his deeds known to their descendants,¹⁰

(Psa 78:6) so that the next generation, children yet to be
born, might know about them.

They will grow up and tell their descendants about them.¹¹

(Psa 78:7) Then they will place their confidence in God.

They will not forget the works of God, and they will obey¹²
his commands.

(Psa 78:8) Then they will not be like their ancestors, who
were a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that
was not committed and faithful to God.¹³

(Psa 78:9) The Ephraimites¹⁴ were armed with bows,¹⁵ but
they retreated in the day of battle.¹⁶

(Psa 78:10) They did not keep their covenant with God,¹⁷
and they refused to obey¹⁸ his law.

(Psa 78:11) They forgot what he had done,¹⁹ the amazing
things he had shown them.

(Psa 78:12) He did amazing things in the sight of their
ancestors, in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan.²⁰

(Psa 78:13) He divided the sea and led them across it;
he made the water stand in a heap.

(Psa 78:14) He led them with a cloud by day, and with the
light of a fire all night long.

(Psa 78:15) He broke open rocks in the wilderness,
and gave them enough water to fill the depths of the sea.²¹

(Psa 78:16) He caused streams to flow from the rock, and made the water flow like rivers.

(Psa 78:17) Yet they continued to sin against him, and rebelled against the sovereign One²² in the desert.

(Psa 78:18) They willfully challenged God²³ by asking for food to satisfy their appetite.

(Psa 78:19) They insulted God, saying,²⁴
“Is God really able to give us food²⁵ in the wilderness?

(Psa 78:20) Yes,²⁶ he struck a rock and water flowed out, streams gushed forth.
But can he also give us food?
Will he provide meat for his people?”

(Psa 78:21) When²⁷ the LORD heard this, he was furious.
A fire broke out against Jacob,
and his anger flared up²⁸ against Israel,

(Psa 78:22) because they did not have faith in God, and did not trust his ability to deliver them.²⁹

(Psa 78:23) He gave a command to the clouds above, and opened the doors in the sky.

(Psa 78:24) He rained down manna for them to eat; he gave them the grain of heaven.³⁰

(Psa 78:25) Man ate the food of the mighty ones.³¹
He sent them more than enough to eat.³²

(Psa 78:26) He brought the east wind through the sky, and by his strength led forth the south wind.

(Psa 78:27) He rained down meat on them like dust,
birds as numerous as the sand on the seashores.³³

(Psa 78:28) He caused them to fall right in the middle of
their camp, all around their homes.

(Psa 78:29) They ate until they were stuffed;³⁴ he gave
them what they desired.

(Psa 78:30) They were not yet filled up,³⁵ their food was still
in their mouths,

(Psa 78:31) when the anger of God flared up against them.
He killed some of the strongest of them;
he brought the young men of Israel to their knees.

(Psa 78:32) Despite all this, they continued to sin, and did
not trust him to do amazing things.³⁶

(Psa 78:33) So he caused them to die unsatisfied³⁷
and filled with terror.³⁸

(Psa 78:34) When he struck them down,³⁹ they sought his
favor;⁴⁰ they turned back and longed for God.

(Psa 78:35) They remembered that God was their
protector,⁴¹ and that the sovereign God was their
deliverer.⁴²

(Psa 78:36) But they deceived him with their words,⁴³ and
lied to him.⁴⁴

(Psa 78:37) They were not really committed to him,⁴⁵ and
they were unfaithful to his covenant.

(Psa 78:38) Yet he is compassionate.

He forgives sin and does not destroy. He often holds back his anger,
and does not stir up his fury.⁴⁶

(Psa 78:39) He remembered⁴⁷ that they were made of flesh,
and were like a wind that blows past and does not return.⁴⁸

(Psa 78:40) How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness,
and insulted him⁴⁹ in the desert!

(Psa 78:41) They again challenged God,⁵⁰
and offended⁵¹ the Holy One of Israel.⁵²

(Psa 78:42) They did not remember what he had done,⁵³
how he delivered them from the enemy,⁵⁴

(Psa 78:43) when he performed his awesome deeds⁵⁵ in Egypt,
and his acts of judgment⁵⁶ in the region of Zoan.

(Psa 78:44) He turned their rivers into blood,
and they could not drink from their streams.

(Psa 78:45) He sent swarms of biting insects against them,⁵⁷
as well as frogs that overran their land.⁵⁸

(Psa 78:46) He gave their crops to the grasshopper, the fruit
of their labor to the locust.

(Psa 78:47) He destroyed their vines with hail,
and their sycamore-fig trees with driving rain.

(Psa 78:48) He rained hail down on their cattle,⁵⁹
and hurled lightning bolts down on their livestock.⁶⁰

(Psa 78:49) His raging anger lashed out against them,⁶¹
He sent fury, rage, and trouble

as messengers who bring disaster.⁶²

(Psa 78:50) He sent his anger in full force;⁶³ he did not spare them from death; he handed their lives over to destruction.⁶⁴

(Psa 78:51) He struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, the firstfruits of their reproductive power⁶⁵ in the tents of Ham.

(Psa 78:52) Yet he brought out his people like sheep; he led them through the wilderness like a flock.

(Psa 78:53) He guided them safely along, while the sea covered their enemies.

(Psa 78:54) He brought them to the border of his holy land, to this mountainous land⁶⁶ which his right hand⁶⁷ acquired.

(Psa 78:55) He drove the nations out from before them; he assigned them their tribal allotments⁶⁸ and allowed the tribes of Israel to settle down.⁶⁹

(Psa 78:56) Yet they challenged and defied⁷⁰ the sovereign God,⁷¹ and did not obey⁷² his commands.⁷³

(Psa 78:57) They were unfaithful⁷⁴ and acted as treacherously as⁷⁵ their ancestors; they were as unreliable as a malfunctioning bow.⁷⁶

(Psa 78:58) They made him angry with their pagan shrines,⁷⁷ and made him jealous with their idols.

(Psa 78:59) God heard and was angry; he completely rejected Israel.

(Psa 78:60) He abandoned⁷⁸ the sanctuary at Shiloh, the tent where he lived among men.

(Psa 78:61) He allowed the symbol of his strong presence to be captured;⁷⁹ he gave the symbol of his splendor⁸⁰ into the hand of the enemy.⁸¹

(Psa 78:62) He delivered his people over to the sword, and was angry with his chosen nation.⁸²

(Psa 78:63) Fire consumed their⁸³ young men, and their⁸⁴ virgins remained unmarried.⁸⁵

(Psa 78:64) Their⁸⁶ priests fell by the sword, but their⁸⁷ widows did not weep.⁸⁸

(Psa 78:65) But then the Lord awoke from his sleep;⁸⁹ he was like a warrior in a drunken rage.⁹⁰

(Psa 78:66) He drove his enemies back; he made them a permanent target for insults.⁹¹

(Psa 78:67) He rejected the tent of Joseph; he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim. (Psa 78:68) He chose the tribe of Judah, and Mount Zion, which he loves.

(Psa 78:69) He made his sanctuary as enduring as the heavens above;⁹² as secure as the earth, which he established permanently.⁹³

(Psa 78:70) He chose David, his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds.

(Psa 78:71) He took him away from following the mother sheep,⁹⁴ and made him the shepherd of Jacob, his people,

and of Israel, his chosen nation.⁹⁵

(Psa 78:72) David⁹⁶ cared for them with pure motives;⁹⁷ he led them with skill.⁹⁸

(Psa 79:1) Psalm 79¹

A psalm of Asaph.

O God, foreigners² have invaded your chosen land;³ they have polluted your holy temple and turned Jerusalem⁴ into a heap of ruins.

(Psa 79:2) They have given the corpses of your servants to the birds of the sky;⁵
the flesh of your loyal followers
to the beasts of the earth.

(Psa 79:3) They have made their blood flow like water all around Jerusalem, and there is no one to bury them.⁶

(Psa 79:4) We have become an object of disdain to our neighbors;
those who live on our borders taunt and insult us.⁷

(Psa 79:5) How long will this go on, O LORD?⁸
Will you stay angry forever?
How long will your rage⁹ burn like fire?

(Psa 79:6) Pour out your anger on the nations that do not acknowledge you,¹⁰ on the kingdoms that do not pray to you!¹¹

(Psa 79:7) For they have devoured Jacob and destroyed his home.

(Psa 79:8) Do not hold us accountable for the sins of earlier generations!¹²

Quickly send your compassion our way,¹³ for we are in serious trouble!¹⁴

(Psa 79:9) Help us, O God, our deliverer!

For the sake of your glorious reputation,¹⁵ rescue us!
Forgive our sins for the sake of your reputation!¹⁶

(Psa 79:10) Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Before our very eyes may the shed blood of your servants be avenged among the nations!¹⁷

(Psa 79:11) Listen to the painful cries of the prisoners!¹⁸

Use your great strength to set free those condemned to die!¹⁹

(Psa 79:12) Pay back our neighbors in full!²⁰

May they be insulted the same way they insulted you, O Lord!²¹

(Psa 79:13) Then we, your people, the sheep of your pasture, will continually thank you.²²

We will tell coming generations of your praiseworthy acts.²³

(Psa 80:1) Psalm 80¹

For the music director; according to the shushan-eduth style;² a psalm of Asaph.

O shepherd of Israel, pay attention,

you who lead Joseph like a flock of sheep!

You who sit enthroned above the winged angels,³ reveal your splendor!⁴

(Psa 80:2) In the sight of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh reveal⁵ your power!

Come and deliver us!6

(Psa 80:3) O God, restore us!
Smile on us!7 Then we will be delivered!8

(Psa 80:4) O LORD God, invincible warrior!9
How long will you remain angry at your people while they
pray to you?10

(Psa 80:5) You have given them tears as food;11
you have made them drink tears by the measure.12

(Psa 80:6) You have made our neighbors dislike us,13 and
our enemies insult us.

(Psa 80:7) O God, invincible warrior,14 restore us!
Smile on us!15 Then we will be delivered!16

(Psa 80:8) You uprooted a vine17 from Egypt;
you drove out nations and transplanted it.

(Psa 80:9) You cleared the ground for it;18 it took root,19
and filled the land.

(Psa 80:10) The mountains were covered by its shadow, the
highest cedars20 by its branches.

(Psa 80:11) Its branches reached the Mediterranean Sea,21
and its shoots the Euphrates River.22

(Psa 80:12) Why did you break down its walls,23 so that all
who pass by pluck its fruit?24

(Psa 80:13) The wild boars of the forest ruin it;25 the
insects26 of the field feed on it.

(Psa 80:14) O God, invincible warrior,²⁷ come back!
Look down from heaven and take notice! Take care of this
vine,

(Psa 80:15) the root²⁸ your right hand planted, the shoot
you made to grow!²⁹

(Psa 80:16) It is burned³⁰ and cut down.
They die because you are displeased with them.³¹
(Psa 80:17) May you give support to the one you have
chosen,³² to the one whom you raised up for yourself!³³

(Psa 80:18) Then we will not turn away from you.
Revive us and we will pray to you!³⁴

(Psa 80:19) O LORD God, invincible warrior,³⁵ restore us!
Smile on us!³⁶ Then we will be delivered!³⁷
(Psa 81:1) Psalm 81

For the music director; according to the gittith style;² by
Asaph.

Shout for joy to God, our source of strength! Shout out to the
God of Jacob!

(Psa 81:2) Sing³ a song and play the tambourine,
the pleasant sounding harp, and the ten-stringed
instrument!

(Psa 81:3) Sound the ram's horn on the day of the new
moon,⁴ and on the day of the full moon when our festival
begins.⁵

(Psa 81:4) For observing the festival is a requirement for
Israel;⁶ it is an ordinance given by the God of Jacob.

(Psa 81:5) He decreed it as a regulation in Joseph, when he attacked the land of Egypt.⁷
I heard a voice I did not recognize.⁸

(Psa 81:6) It said:⁹ "I removed the burden from his shoulder; his hands were released from holding the basket.¹⁰

(Psa 81:7) In your distress you called out and I rescued you. I answered you from a dark thundercloud.¹¹
I tested you at the waters of Meribah.¹² (Selah)

(Psa 81:8) I said,¹³ 'Listen, my people! I will warn¹⁴ you!
O Israel, if only you would obey me!¹⁵

(Psa 81:9) There must be¹⁶ no other¹⁷ god among you. You must not worship a foreign god.

(Psa 81:10) I am the LORD, your God, the one who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it!'

(Psa 81:11) But my people did not obey me;¹⁸ Israel did not submit to me.¹⁹

(Psa 81:12) I gave them over to their stubborn desires;²⁰ they did what seemed right to them.²¹

(Psa 81:13) If only my people would obey me!²² If only Israel would keep my commands!²³

(Psa 81:14) Then I would quickly subdue their enemies, and attack²⁴ their adversaries."

(Psa 81:15) (May those who hate the LORD²⁵ cower in fear²⁶ before him!

May they be permanently humiliated!)²⁷ (Psa 81:16) “I would feed Israel the best wheat,²⁸ and would satisfy your appetite²⁹ with honey from the rocky cliffs.”³⁰

(Psa 82:1) Psalm 82

A psalm of Asaph.

God stands in² the assembly of El;³
in the midst of the gods⁴ he renders judgment.⁵

(Psa 82:2) He says,⁶ “How long will you make unjust legal decisions and show favoritism to the wicked?⁷ (Selah)

(Psa 82:3) Defend the cause of the poor and the fatherless!⁸
Vindicate the oppressed and suffering!

(Psa 82:4) Rescue the poor and needy!
Deliver them from the power⁹ of the wicked!

(Psa 82:5) They¹⁰ neither know nor understand.
They stumble¹¹ around in the dark,
while all the foundations of the earth crumble.¹²

(Psa 82:6) I thought,¹³ ‘You are gods;
all of you are sons of the Most High.’¹⁴

(Psa 82:7) Yet you will die like mortals;¹⁵
you will fall like all the other rulers.”¹⁶

(Psa 82:8) Rise up, O God, and execute judgment on the earth!

For you own¹⁷ all the nations.

(Psa 83:1) Psalm 83

A song, a psalm of Asaph.

O God, do not be silent!
Do not ignore us!² Do not be inactive, O God!

(Psa 83:2) For look, your enemies are making a commotion;
those who hate you are hostile.³

(Psa 83:3) They carefully plot⁴ against your people,
and make plans to harm⁵ the ones you cherish.⁶

(Psa 83:4) They say, “Come on, let’s annihilate them so they
are no longer a nation!⁷
Then the name of Israel will be remembered no more.”

(Psa 83:5) Yes,⁸ they devise a unified strategy;⁹ they form
an alliance¹⁰ against you.

(Psa 83:6) It includes¹¹ the tents of Edom and the
Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites,¹²

(Psa 83:7) Gebal,¹³ Ammon, and Amalek, Philistia and the
inhabitants of Tyre.¹⁴

(Psa 83:8) Even Assyria has allied with them,
lending its strength to the descendants of Lot.¹⁵ (Selah)

(Psa 83:9) Do to them as you did to Midian¹⁶ —
as you did to Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon River!¹⁷

(Psa 83:10) They were destroyed at Endor;¹⁸
their corpses were like manure¹⁹ on the ground.

(Psa 83:11) Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,²⁰ and all
their rulers like Zebah and Zalmunna,²¹

(Psa 83:12) who said,²² “Let’s take over²³ the pastures of
God!” (Psa 83:13) O my God, make them like dead
thistles,²⁴

like dead weeds blown away by²⁵ the wind!

(Psa 83:14) Like the fire that burns down the forest,
or the flames that consume the mountainsides,²⁶

(Psa 83:15) chase them with your gale winds, and terrify²⁷
them with your windstorm.

(Psa 83:16) Cover²⁸ their faces with shame, so they might
seek²⁹ you,³⁰ O LORD.

(Psa 83:17) May they be humiliated and continually
terrified!³¹

May they die in shame!³²

(Psa 83:18) Then they will know³³ that you alone are the
LORD,³⁴ the sovereign king³⁵ over all the earth.

(Psa 84:1) Psalm 84¹

For the music director; according to the gittith style;²
written by the Korahites, a psalm.

How lovely is the place where you live,³
O LORD who rules over all!⁴

(Psa 84:2) I desperately want to be⁵
in the courts of the LORD's temple.⁶
My heart and my entire being⁷ shout for joy to the living
God.

(Psa 84:3) Even the birds find a home there, and the
swallow⁸ builds a nest, where she can protect her young⁹
near your altars, O LORD who rules over all, my king and my
God.

(Psa 84:4) How blessed¹⁰ are those who live in your temple
and praise you continually! (Selah)

(Psa 84:5) How blessed are those who¹¹ find their strength in you, and long to travel the roads that lead to your temple!¹²

(Psa 84:6) As they pass through the Baca Valley,¹³ he provides a spring for them.¹⁴
The rain¹⁵ even covers it with pools of water.¹⁶

(Psa 84:7) They are sustained as they travel along;¹⁷ each one appears¹⁸ before God in Zion.

(Psa 84:8) O LORD, sovereign God,¹⁹ hear my prayer!
Listen, O God of Jacob! (Selah)

(Psa 84:9) O God, take notice of our shield!²⁰
Show concern for your chosen king!²¹

(Psa 84:10) Certainly²² spending just one day in your temple courts is better than spending a thousand elsewhere.²³
I would rather stand at the entrance²⁴ to the temple of my God than live²⁵ in the tents of the wicked.

(Psa 84:11) For the LORD God is our sovereign protector.²⁶
The LORD bestows favor²⁷ and honor;
he withholds no good thing from those who have integrity.²⁸

(Psa 84:12) O LORD who rules over all,²⁹
how blessed are those who trust in you!³⁰
(Psa 85:1) Psalm 85¹

For the music director; written by the Korahites, a psalm.

O LORD, you showed favor to your land;
you restored the well-being of Jacob.²

(Psa 85:2) You pardoned³ the wrongdoing of your people;
you forgave⁴ all their sin. (Selah)

(Psa 85:3) You withdrew all your fury;
you turned back from your raging anger.⁵

(Psa 85:4) Restore us, O God our deliverer!
Do not be displeased with us!⁶

(Psa 85:5) Will you stay mad at us forever?
Will you remain angry throughout future generations?⁷

(Psa 85:6) Will you not revive us once more?
Then your people will rejoice in you!

(Psa 85:7) O LORD, show us your loyal love!
Bestow on us your deliverance!

(Psa 85:8) I will listen to what God the LORD says.⁸
For he will make⁹ peace with his people, his faithful
followers.¹⁰
Yet they must not¹¹ return to their foolish ways.

(Psa 85:9) Certainly his loyal followers will soon experience
his deliverance;¹² then his splendor will again appear in our
land.¹³

(Psa 85:10) Loyal love and faithfulness meet;¹⁴
deliverance and peace greet each other with a kiss.¹⁵

(Psa 85:11) Faithfulness grows from the ground, and
deliverance looks down from the sky.¹⁶

(Psa 85:12) Yes, the LORD will bestow his good blessings,¹⁷
and our land will yield¹⁸ its crops.

(Psa 85:13) Deliverance goes¹⁹ before him, and prepares²⁰
a pathway for him.²¹

(Psa 86:1) Psalm 86

A prayer of David.

Listen² O LORD! Answer me! For I am oppressed and needy.

(Guzik)

Psa 86:1-17

Psalms 86 – Help from the Great God

The title of this Psalm is simply, A Prayer of David. We can't place it to a specific time in David's life, because there are too many possible points where this connects with his general circumstances. This Psalm is also notable because David calls God Adonai ("Master") seven times.

"There are four other psalms each called by the name Tephillah, or 'prayer,' but this deserves to be distinguished from the rest and known as 'the prayer of David,' even as the ninetieth Psalm is known as 'the prayer of Moses.' It savours of David. The man of sincerity, of ardor, of trials, of faults, and of great heart, pleads, sobs, and trusts through all the verses of this psalm." (Spurgeon)

A. A plea for help with reasons given.

1. (Psa_86:1) Help me because of my great need. Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me; For I am poor and needy.

a. Bow down Your ear: David used expressive language to speak of his need. The idea – figurative, of course – is that God in heaven bows His head to earth to hear David's plea for help – David's cry, "Hear me."

i. "When our prayers are lowly by reason of our humility, or feeble by reason of our sickness, or without wing by reason of our despondency, the Lord will bow down to them, the infinitely exalted Jehovah will have respect unto them." (Spurgeon)

ii. Following this request will come a reason David will give to God why his prayer should be answered. David thought carefully in his prayer, and presented both requests and reasons to God. "The psalm is unique in its method of urging a petition upon the ground of some known fact." (Morgan)

b. For I am poor and needy: David gives the first of several reasons why God should answer. David here appealed to God's sympathy, to His compassion. A hard-hearted God wouldn't care for a poor and needy man, or worse yet might despise him. Yet David knew that God was full of love and compassion and would be moved by the fact that David was, and knew himself to be, poor and needy.

i. It is significant that David began his plea with this. His understanding of the love and compassion of God was foundational.

ii. "To confess that we are poor and needy seem demeaning. To be a servant seems unworthy. We want to be people who deserve something from God because of who we are." (Boice)

2. (Psa_86:2) Help me because I am connected to You. Preserve my life, for I am holy; You are my God;

Save Your servant who trusts in You!

a. Preserve my life: David's problem was desperate; he felt that without God's help he could perish. Considering the many people set against him (Psa_86:14), he had reason to be this concerned.

i. Beyond this, we aren't told the nature of David's need. We know it was severe, and he felt it to be life threatening. Yet we don't know if it was danger from Saul, or the Philistines, or from assassins, or from a dozen other things. This is good, because it allows to see our need in David's need. It allows us to know that we can approach God on the same basis for whatever our need is.

b. For I am holy: This wasn't a claim to absolute holiness. David knew he was a sinner; that he had and would sin. Yet he also knew that as a man among other men - and especially next to those who were against him - he was a holy man.

c. You are my God; save Your servant who trusts in You! David based this plea on three similar ideas, all rooted in the fact that he was connected to God.

· · I am holy; "I am connected to You morally God; I embrace Your holiness in my own life."

· · You are my God; "I am connected to You with worship and honor."

· · Save Your servant who trusts in You; "I am connected to You in trust and faith."

i. In all this we see how intelligent and thought-out David's prayer was. When he came to the throne of God, he came with careful thought.

3. (Psa_86:3-4) Help me because I cry unto You. Be merciful to me, O Lord, For I cry to You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant,
For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

a. Be merciful to me ... For I cry to You all day long: David asked for mercy because he was completely dependent upon God. He cried to God all day long because he could not or would not rely on anyone else for help.

i. "Lest any should, by the former words (I am holy), suspect him to be a merit-monger, he beggeth mercy, with instancy and constancy of request." (Trapp)

ii. To take this same figure, many of us would cry to God for a period of time and then figure out another way to address our need. Not David; he relied on God and God alone.

iii. O Lord: This is the first of seven uses of Adonai in this Psalm. "The name of God which dominates is Adonahy, or Lord, which indicates absolute Lordship, and by the use of which the singer shows his sense of submission and loyalty." (Morgan)

b. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You ... I lift up my soul: The reason is much the same as in the previous verse; an expression of reliance and trust in God (to You ... I lift up my soul). But the request is beautifully stated: Rejoice the soul of Your servant. David felt that he could only find joy in his soul as God met his need.

4. (Psa_86:5) Help me because You are a gracious God. For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.

a. For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive: David based this plea on the graciousness of God; knowing that He is good and ready to forgive. Far too many people who should know better doubt both the goodness of God and His readiness to forgive.

i. "Whereas most men, though they will forgive, yet they are not ready to forgive, they are hardly brought to it, though

they do it at last. But God is 'ready to forgive'." (Caryl, cited in Spurgeon) ii. "We are blinded by sin, and cannot believe that God is ready to forgive. We think that we must induce Him to forgive, by tears, promises of amendment, religious observances ... Oh, clasp this word to your heart! Say it over and over again - 'Ready to forgive, ready to forgive!'" (Meyer)

iii. Many wait to repent and ask forgiveness because they think that time might make God more forgiving. That isn't possible. He is ready to forgive now.

iv. "You have fallen a hundred times, and are ashamed to come to God again; it seems to much to expect that He will receive you again. But He will, for He is ready to forgive." (Meyer)

b. Abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You: As David called upon God for help, he expected abundant mercy from God. This expectation of faith would be answered.

5. (Psa_86:6-7) The confidence of the plea for help. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; And attend to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, For You will answer me.

a. Give ear ... attend to the voice of my supplication: Again, David simply asked for God to hear him. He was confident that if the loving, merciful God heard his plea, then He would answer favorably.

i. David here repeated the idea from Psa_86:1, but the repetition had a purpose. "He repeats and multiplies his requests, both to ease his own troubled mind, and to prevail with God, who is well-pleased with his people's importunity in prayer." (Poole)

b. In the day of trouble I will call upon You, for You will answer me: This was David's wonderful confidence in God. He knew that God was not a fair-weather friend; that instead God could be counted on even in the day of trouble.

i. Adam Clarke put the emphasis on my and me in Psa_86:6-7. "Attend to me. Millions call upon thee for help and mercy; but who has more need than myself?"

ii. You will answer me: "Our experience confirms us in the belief that Jehovah the living God really does aid those who call upon him, and therefore we pray and mean to pray, not because we are so fascinated by prayer that for its own sake we would continue in it if it proved to be mere folly and superstition, as vain philosophers assert; but because we really, indeed, and of a truth, find it to be a practical and effectual means of obtaining help from God in the hour of need." (Spurgeon)

B. Depending on the great God who helps His people.

1. (Psa_86:8-10) The greatness of God.

Among the gods there is none like You, O Lord; Nor are there any works like Your works.

All nations whom You have made

Shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And shall glorify Your name.

For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God.

a. Among the gods there is none like You: David's understanding of who God is in this Psalm – listening, holy, worthy of trust, merciful, good, ready to forgive – stands in contrast to the contemporary understanding of many of the pagan gods, such as Baal, Ashtoreth, or Dagon. Many of these gods were understood to be bitter, vengeful, cunning,

and sexually depraved. David knew that the Lord God was different.

i. "I am not now calling upon a deaf and impotent idol, for then I might cry my heart out, and all in vain, as they did, 1Ki_18:26-29; but upon the Almighty and most gracious God." (Poole)

b. Nor are there any works like Your works: David knew that when God did something, it was glorious. It had the imprint of His glorious character upon it, and could not be compared to the works of man.

i. "Works probably mean here the things God has made, rather than the deeds He has done (which come later, Psa_86:10 a)." (Kidner)

c. All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You: David recognized that God was creator and master over all nations, not merely Israel. In a day when most gods were considered to be only national or regional deities, David knew that his God – the living God, the true God – was different.

d. For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God: David understood that the Lord was not one God among many gods, or even the best God among many gods. He alone is God, and none other.

i. "Wondrous things, variously translated in the Psalms, is a frequent term for God's miracles of salvation." (Kidner)

ii. It is do, not did (though did would be true also). "Note that the verb doest is in the present, the Lord is doing wondrous things, they are transpiring before our eyes." (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_86:11-12) Whole-life dependence on the great God. Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth;

Unite my heart to fear Your name.

I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And I will glorify Your name forevermore.

a. Teach me Your way, O Lord: Because David knew who God was – not perfectly, of course, but with great understanding – his natural reaction was to submit himself to this great, gracious God and to ask Him to teach him.

i. Again, this shows that David understood that this amazing God cared for him. This same majestic God, whom all nations will worship and glorify, will hear the plea from one poor and needy man (Psa_86:1) who asks, “Teach me Your way, O Lord.”

ii. It also shows a subtle shift in the Psalm. In the first section (Psa_86:1-7) David desperately cried out for help. In doing so, he thought deeply about who God is and what He does. Those thoughts did not make David retract his plea for help, but it did make him say, “I need to learn from this great God. Teach me Your way, O Lord.”

iii. We could even say that David’s great need showed him his need to be taught. It brought him to say, “Don’t give me my way, Lord; teach me Your way.”

iv. “Most of us, when we pray, are concerned about deliverance and help and guidance and such things. But we are not nearly as concerned to be taught God’s way and to be helped to serve him with an undivided heart.” (Boice)

b. I will walk in Your truth: This determination gave integrity to David’s request. He wanted to be taught so that he could live; so that he could walk in God’s truth. This wasn’t merely to satisfy intellectual curiosity or to win arguments; it was to live.

i. "Walking, in the Scripture, takes in the whole of our conversation or conduct: and to walk in anything, intends a fulness of it. For a man to walk in pride, is something more than to be proud: it says, that pride is his way, his element; that he is wholly under the influence of it." (Jay, cited in Spurgeon)

c. Unite my heart to fear Your name: David knew he could only walk in God's truth with a united heart. A divided heart – divided among different loyalties and different deities – could never walk in God's truth.

i. "Our minds are apt to be divided between a variety of objects, like trickling streamlets which waste their force in a hundred runnels; our great desire should be to have all our life-floods poured into one channel and to have that channel directed towards the Lord alone." (Spurgeon)

ii. Unite my heart: "Join all the purposes, resolutions, and affections of my heart together, to fear and to glorify thy name. This is a most important prayer. A divided heart is a great curse; scattered affections are a miserable plague. When the heart is not at unity with itself, the work of religion cannot go on. Indecision of mind and division of affections mar any work. The heart must be one, that the work may be one. If this be wanting, all is wrong. This is a prayer which becomes the mouth of every Christian." (Clarke)

iii. "As thou art God alone (Psa_86:10), so let my heart be toward thee alone." (Trapp)

iv. We could say that the united heart is the goal; the way to the goal is "teach me Your way, O Lord" and "I will walk in Your truth." David's therefore indicates that this couldn't happen by David's self-effort. Instead, he asked God to unite his heart as He was taught and walked in the truth.

v. At the same time, the promise of a unified heart is part of some of the Old Testament promises of the New Covenant,

as in Eze_11:19 : Then I will give them one heart. As part of this New Covenant, we have special reason to pray expecting God to work a unified heart in us.

d. Way ... truth ... unite: He is our way, our truth, and our life (Joh_14:6). He is our way; we say, "Teach me Your way." He is our truth; we say, "I will walk in Your truth." He is our life; we say, "Unite my heart to fear Your name."

e. I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart: This is what David wanted to do with his united heart – he wanted to praise God with it. From his understanding of God previously in the Psalm he knew God was worthy of such praise; but he knew he could only praise God as he should with God uniting his heart.

i. David wanted to do this with his united heart; but perhaps he also understood that praise is one way to unite the heart. When we consciously focus the attention of our mind, emotions, and affections upon who God is and what He has done for us, our heart is marvelously united.

ii. "Here is a God-given beginning (and practical means) to the answer of his prayer: his whole heart absorbed in praise." (Kidner)

iii. "Though nothing can add to God's essential glory, yet praise exalts him in the eyes of others. When we praise God, we spread his fame and renown, we display the trophies of his excellency." (Watson, cited in Spurgeon)

iv. O Lord my God: "This is the second time in the Psalm that David calls the Lord 'my God,' the first time he was in an agony of prayer (Psa_86:2), and now he is in an ecstasy of praise." (Spurgeon)

· · He is our God in times of trouble – we rely upon Him.

· · He is our God in times of rejoicing – we praise Him.

3. (Psa_86:13-15) Depending on the graciousness of God. For great is Your mercy toward me, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

O God, the proud have risen against me,

And a mob of violent men have sought my life, And have not set You before them.

But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

a. For great is Your mercy toward me, and You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol: David thought about God's past deliverance in his life. The merciful God who rescued him before would rescue him again.

i. Great is Your mercy: "Mercy" here is hesed, the great word for covenant love, love that is promised in a covenant relationship.

ii. "As for the rescue from the depths of Sheol, it is possible to take this as either past or future." (Kidner)

b. The proud have risen against me, and a mob of violent men have sought my life: David lived such a long life of danger and adventure that we can't precisely place this event in his life. It could have come at several points. Nevertheless, the danger was clear and real.

c. And have not set You before them: For David it was clear. Proud men, violent mobs, are not surrendered to God. If these proud and violent men had set God before them, they would share some of His compassion, graciousness, longsuffering, and great mercy and truth.

d. You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion ...: David knew that the evil of man did not negate the goodness of God. God is full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and

abundant in mercy and truth despite the pride and violence of men.

i. But You: “What a contrast! We get away from the hectorings and blusterings of proud but puny men to the glory and goodness of the Lord.” (Spurgeon)

ii. It seems that twice in this Psalm David quoted the words and ideas from Moses’ encounter with God recorded in Exo_34:6-7. We see this at Psa_86:5 : For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy. Also, it is seen here in Psa_86:15 : But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

iii. Compare this with the phrasing of Exo_34:6-7, the great revelation of God to Moses: The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.

iv. “David seems to have stood in the cleft of the rock with Moses, and to have heard the name of the Lord proclaimed even as the great lawgiver did, for in two places in this Psalm he almost quotes verbatim the passage in Exo_34:6.” (Spurgeon)

v. We could say that David read his Bible, and learned who God is. Then he took that knowledge to prayer, and asked God to answer his prayer because of who He revealed Himself to be in the Bible.

4. (Psa_86:16-17) A hopeful plea for help. Oh, turn to me, and have mercy on me! Give Your strength to Your servant, And save the son of Your maidservant.

Show me a sign for good,

That those who hate me may see it and be ashamed,
Because You, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

a. Turn to me, and have mercy on me! Through it all, David never approached God on the basis of what he deserved. Anything he received from God, he would receive on the basis of mercy.

b. Give Your strength to Your servant: This plea of David is answered by the later exhortation by Paul: Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might (Eph_6:10). God does give His strength to His servant!

c. Save the son of Your maidservant: We aren't told much in 1 or 2 Samuel about David's mother, but this brief mention suggests that she was a godly woman who served God, who could be called "Your maidservant."

i. In a few places (Gen_14:14, Jer_2:14) the Bible gives the idea of a home-born slave – someone who is a slave because their mother was a slave, and they were born into their servitude. That may be David's idea here; to express how completely he belongs to God, he pleads as the son of Your maidservant.

d. Show me a sign for good: David seems to say, "Lord, I do not expect all the answer right now. Yet, show me a sign for good – give me some indication of Your help and power – so that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed."

i. Here David is wonderful for his humility – not demanding all the answer from God right now. He is also wonderful for his humanity – asking for a sign for good at the moment.

ii. In some cases, it is wrong to ask God, "Show me a sign for good." It is wrong when our attitude is, "God, prove to me

that You love me” or “I will believe if You show me a sign, but if You do not I will not believe You.” Yet there are some good ways legitimate circumstances in which we can cry out to God, “Show me a sign for good.”

- · Answers to prayer are a sign for good (Psa_86:1, Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me).

- · Preservation of character is a sign for good (Psa_86:2, for I am holy).

- · Deliverance from trouble is a sign for good (Psa_86:2, Save Your servant who trusts in You!).

- · Joy in a surrendered life is a sign for good (Psa_86:4, Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul).

- · A sense of forgiveness is a sign for good (Psa_86:5, You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive).

- · Confidence in God is a sign for good (Psa_86:7, For You will answer me).

- · Knowing and declaring the greatness of God is a sign for good (Psa_86:10, For You are great, and do wondrous things).

- · When the proud and violent are enemies, it is a sign for good (Psa_86:14, the proud have risen against me, and a mob of violent men have sought my life).

iii. Some – such as Adam Clarke – take this expression differently. “‘Make with me a sign.’ Fix the honourable mark of thy name upon me, that I may be known to be thy servant. There seems to be an allusion here to the marking

of a slave, to ascertain whose property he was.” Perhaps we could say that the idea is, “Put Your mark of goodness on me, so that all can see that I am Yours and You will deliver me.”

e. Because You, Lord, have helped me and comforted me: Once again David bases his current expectation on God’s prior help. Every past experience of God’s goodness to us is a promise of His continued blessing.

(Psa 86:2) Protect me,³ for I am loyal!
O my God, deliver your servant, who trusts in you!

(Psa 86:3) Have mercy on me,⁴ O Lord, for I cry out to you all day long!

(Psa 86:4) Make your servant⁵ glad, for to you, O Lord, I pray!⁶

(Psa 86:5) Certainly⁷ O Lord, you are kind⁸ and forgiving, and show great faithfulness to all who cry out to you.

(Psa 86:6) O LORD, hear my prayer!
Pay attention to my plea for mercy!

(Psa 86:7) In my time of trouble I cry out to you, for you will answer me.

(Psa 86:8) None can compare to you among the gods, O Lord!
Your exploits are incomparable!⁹

(Psa 86:9) All the nations, whom you created, will come and worship you,¹⁰ O Lord. They will honor your name.

(Psa 86:10) For you are great and do amazing things.

You alone are God.

(Psa 86:11) O LORD, teach me how you want me to live!¹¹
Then I will obey your commands.¹²
Make me wholeheartedly committed to you!¹³

(Psa 86:12) O Lord, my God, I will give you thanks with my whole heart!
I will honor your name continually!¹⁴

(Psa 86:13) For you will extend your great loyal love to me,¹⁵ and will deliver my life¹⁶ from the depths of Sheol.¹⁷

(Psa 86:14) O God, arrogant men attack me;¹⁸
a gang¹⁹ of ruthless men, who do not respect you, seek my life.²⁰

(Psa 86:15) But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and merciful God.
You are patient²¹ and demonstrate great loyal love and faithfulness.²²

(Psa 86:16) Turn toward me and have mercy on me!
Give your servant your strength! Deliver your slave!²³

(Psa 86:17) Show me evidence of your favor!²⁴
Then those who hate me will see it and be ashamed,²⁵ for you, O LORD, will help me and comfort me.²⁶
(Psa 87:1) Psalm 87¹

Written by the Korahites; a psalm, a song.
The LORD's city is in the holy hills.² (Psa 87:2) The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob.

(Psa 87:3) People say wonderful things about you,³

O city of God. (Selah)

(Psa 87:4) I mention Rahab⁴ and Babylon to my followers.⁵
Here are⁶ Philistia and Tyre,⁷ along with Ethiopia.⁸
It is said of them, “This one was born there.”⁹

(Psa 87:5) But it is said of Zion’s residents,¹⁰ “Each one of these¹¹ was born in her, and the sovereign One¹² makes her secure.”¹³

(Psa 87:6) The LORD writes in the census book of the nations,¹⁴ “This one was born there.”¹⁵ (Selah)

(Psa 87:7) As for the singers, as well as the pipers —
all of them sing within your walls.¹⁶

(Psa 88:1) Psalm 88¹

A song, a psalm written by the Korahites; for the music director; according to the machalath-leannoth style;² a well-written song³ by Heman the Ezrachite.

O LORD God who delivers me!⁴

By day I cry out
and at night I pray before you.⁵

(Psa 88:2) Listen to my prayer!⁶
Pay attention⁷ to my cry for help!

(Psa 88:3) For my life⁸ is filled with troubles and I am ready
to enter Sheol.⁹

(Psa 88:4) They treat me like¹⁰ those who descend into the
grave.¹¹
I am like a helpless man,¹²

(Psa 88:5) adrift¹³ among the dead, like corpses lying in the
grave, whom you remember no more, and who are cut off
from your power.¹⁴

(Psa 88:6) You place me in the lowest regions of the pit,¹⁵ in
the dark places, in the watery depths.

(Psa 88:7) Your anger bears down on me,
and you overwhelm me with all your waves. (Selah)

(Psa 88:8) You cause those who know me to keep their
distance; you make me an appalling sight to them. I am
trapped and cannot get free.¹⁶

(Psa 88:9) My eyes grow weak because of oppression.
I call out to you, O LORD, all day long;
I spread out my hands in prayer to you.¹⁷

(Psa 88:10) Do you accomplish amazing things for the dead?
Do the departed spirits¹⁸ rise up and give you thanks?
(Selah)

(Psa 88:11) Is your loyal love proclaimed in the grave, or
your faithfulness in the place of the dead?¹⁹

(Psa 88:12) Are your amazing deeds experienced²⁰ in the dark region,²¹ or your deliverance in the land of oblivion?²²

(Psa 88:13) As for me, I cry out to you, O LORD;
in the morning my prayer confronts you.

(Psa 88:14) O LORD, why do you reject me, and pay no attention to me?²³

(Psa 88:15) I am oppressed and have been on the verge of death since my youth.²⁴

I have been subjected to your horrors and am numb with pain.²⁵

(Psa 88:16) Your anger overwhelms me;²⁶ your terrors destroy me.

(Psa 88:17) They surround me like water all day long;
they join forces and encircle me.²⁷

(Psa 88:18) You cause my friends and neighbors to keep their distance;²⁸ those who know me leave me alone in the darkness.²⁹

(Psa 89:1) Psalm 89¹

A well-written song² by Ethan the Ezrachite.

I will sing continually³ about the LORD's faithful deeds; to future generations I will proclaim your faithfulness.⁴

(Psa 89:2) For I say, "Loyal love is permanently established;⁵ in the skies you set up your faithfulness."⁶

(Psa 89:3) The LORD said,⁷

"I have made a covenant with my chosen one;

I have made a promise on oath to David, my servant:

(Psa 89:4) 'I will give you an eternal dynasty⁸
and establish your throne throughout future generations.' "9
(Selah)

(Psa 89:5) O LORD, the heavens¹⁰ praise your amazing
deeds, as well as your faithfulness in the angelic
assembly.¹¹

(Psa 89:6) For who in the skies can compare to the LORD?
Who is like the LORD among the heavenly beings,¹²

(Psa 89:7) a God who is honored¹³ in the great angelic
assembly,¹⁴ and more awesome than¹⁵ all who surround
him?

(Psa 89:8) O LORD, sovereign God!¹⁶
Who is strong like you, O LORD? Your faithfulness surrounds
you.

(Psa 89:9) You rule over the proud sea.¹⁷
When its waves surge,¹⁸ you calm them.

(Psa 89:10) You crushed the Proud One¹⁹ and killed it;²⁰
with your strong arm you scattered your enemies.

(Psa 89:11) The heavens belong to you, as does the earth.
You made the world and all it contains.²¹

(Psa 89:12) You created the north and the south.
Tabor and Hermon²² rejoice in your name.

(Psa 89:13) Your arm is powerful, your hand strong,
your right hand²³ victorious.²⁴

(Psa 89:14) Equity and justice are the foundation of your
throne.²⁵

Loyal love and faithfulness characterize your rule.²⁶

(Psa 89:15) How blessed are the people who worship you!²⁷
O LORD, they experience your favor.²⁸

(Psa 89:16) They rejoice in your name all day long, and are vindicated²⁹ by your justice.

(Psa 89:17) For you give them splendor and strength.³⁰
By your favor we are victorious.³¹

(Psa 89:18) For our shield³² belongs to the LORD, our king to the Holy One of Israel.³³

(Psa 89:19) Then you³⁴ spoke through a vision to your faithful followers³⁵ and said: "I have energized a warrior;³⁶ I have raised up a young man³⁷ from the people.

(Psa 89:20) I have discovered David, my servant.
With my holy oil I have anointed him as king.³⁸

(Psa 89:21) My hand will support him,³⁹ and my arm will strengthen him.

(Psa 89:22) No enemy will be able to exact tribute⁴⁰ from him;⁴¹ a violent oppressor will not be able to humiliate him.⁴²

(Psa 89:23) I will crush his enemies before him; I will strike down those who hate him.

(Psa 89:24) He will experience my faithfulness and loyal love,⁴³ and by my name he will win victories.⁴⁴

(Psa 89:25) I will place his hand over the sea, his right hand over the rivers.⁴⁵

(Psa 89:26) He will call out to me,
'You are my father,⁴⁶ my God, and the protector who
delivers me.'⁴⁷

(Psa 89:27) I will appoint him to be my firstborn son,⁴⁸ the
most exalted of the earth's kings.

(Psa 89:28) I will always extend my loyal love to him, and
my covenant with him is secure.⁴⁹

(Psa 89:29) I will give him an eternal dynasty,⁵⁰
and make his throne as enduring as the skies above.⁵¹

(Psa 89:30) If his sons reject my law and disobey my
regulations,

(Psa 89:31) if they break⁵² my rules
and do not keep my commandments,

(Psa 89:32) I will punish their rebellion by beating them with
a club,⁵³ their sin by inflicting them with bruises.⁵⁴

(Psa 89:33) But I will not remove⁵⁵ my loyal love from him,
nor be unfaithful to my promise.⁵⁶

(Psa 89:34) I will not break⁵⁷ my covenant
or go back on what I promised.⁵⁸

(Psa 89:35) Once and for all I have vowed by my own
holiness, I will never deceive⁵⁹ David.

(Psa 89:36) His dynasty will last forever.⁶⁰
His throne will endure before me, like the sun,⁶¹

(Psa 89:37) it will remain stable, like the moon,⁶²
his throne will endure like the skies."⁶³ (Selah)

(Psa 89:38) But you have spurned⁶⁴ and rejected him;
you are angry with your chosen king.⁶⁵

(Psa 89:39) You have repudiated⁶⁶ your covenant with your
servant;⁶⁷ you have thrown his crown to the ground.⁶⁸

(Psa 89:40) You have broken down all his⁶⁹ walls;
you have made his strongholds a heap of ruins.

(Psa 89:41) All who pass by⁷⁰ have robbed him;
he has become an object of disdain to his neighbors.

(Psa 89:42) You have allowed his adversaries to be
victorious,⁷¹ and all his enemies to rejoice.

(Psa 89:43) You turn back⁷² his sword from the adversary,⁷³
and have not sustained him in battle.⁷⁴

(Psa 89:44) You have brought to an end his splendor,⁷⁵ and
have knocked⁷⁶ his throne to the ground.

(Psa 89:45) You have cut short his youth,⁷⁷
and have covered him with shame. (Selah)

(Psa 89:46) How long, O LORD, will this last?
Will you remain hidden forever?⁷⁸
Will your anger continue to burn like fire?

(Psa 89:47) Take note of my brief lifespan!⁷⁹
Why do you make all people so mortal?⁸⁰

(Psa 89:48) No man can live on without experiencing death,
or deliver his life from the power of Sheol.⁸¹ (Selah)

(Psa 89:49) Where are your earlier faithful deeds,⁸² O
Lord,⁸³

the ones performed in accordance with your reliable oath to David?⁸⁴

(Psa 89:50) Take note, O Lord,⁸⁵ of the way your servants are taunted,⁸⁶ and of how I must bear so many insults from people!⁸⁷

(Psa 89:51) Your enemies, O LORD, hurl insults; they insult your chosen king as they dog his footsteps.⁸⁸

(Psa 89:52) ⁸⁹ The LORD deserves praise⁹⁰ forevermore!

We agree! We agree!⁹¹

(Psa 90:1) Book 4

(Psalms 90 — 106)

Psalm 90¹

A prayer of Moses, the man of God.

O Lord, you have been our protector² through all generations! (Psa 90:2) Even before the mountains came into existence,³

or you brought the world into being,⁴
you were the eternal God.⁵

(Psa 90:3) You make mankind return⁶ to the dust,⁷ and say, “Return, O people!”

(Psa 90:4) Yes,⁸ in your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday that quickly passes, or like one of the divisions of the nighttime.⁹

(Psa 90:5) You bring their lives to an end and they “fall asleep.”¹⁰

In the morning they are like the grass that sprouts up;

(Psa 90:6) in the morning it glistens¹¹ and sprouts up; at evening time it withers¹² and dries up.

(Psa 90:7) Yes,¹³ we are consumed by your anger;
we are terrified by your wrath.

(Psa 90:8) You are aware of our sins;¹⁴
you even know about our hidden sins.¹⁵

(Psa 90:9) Yes,¹⁶ throughout all our days we experience
your raging fury;¹⁷ the years of our lives pass quickly, like a
sigh.¹⁸

(Psa 90:10) The days of our lives add up to seventy years,¹⁹
or eighty, if one is especially strong.²⁰
But even one's best years are marred by trouble and
oppression.²¹
Yes,²² they pass quickly²³ and we fly away.²⁴

(Psa 90:11) Who can really fathom the intensity of your
anger?²⁵
Your raging fury causes people to fear you.²⁶

(Psa 90:12) So teach us to consider our mortality,²⁷ so that
we might live wisely.²⁸

(Psa 90:13) Turn back toward us, O LORD!
How long must this suffering last?²⁹
Have pity on your servants!³⁰

(Psa 90:14) Satisfy us in the morning³¹ with your loyal love!
Then we will shout for joy and be happy³² all our days!

(Psa 90:15) Make us happy in proportion to the days you
have afflicted us, in proportion to the years we have
experienced³³ trouble!

(Psa 90:16) May your servants see your work!³⁴

May their sons see your majesty!³⁵

(Psa 90:17) May our sovereign God extend his favor to us!³⁶
Make our endeavors successful! Yes, make them
successful!³⁷

(Psa 91:1) Psalm 91

As for you, the one who lives² in the shelter of the sovereign
One,³ and resides in the protective shadow⁴ of the mighty
king⁵ —

(Psa 91:2) I say this about the LORD, my shelter and my
stronghold, my God in whom I trust —

(Psa 91:3) he will certainly rescue you from the snare of the
hunter⁶ and from the destructive plague.

(Psa 91:4) He will shelter you⁷ with his wings;⁸ you will find
safety under his wings.

His faithfulness is like a shield or a protective wall.⁹

(Psa 91:5) You need not fear the terrors of the night,¹⁰ the
arrow that flies by day,

(Psa 91:6) the plague that comes in the darkness, or the
disease that comes at noon.¹¹

(Psa 91:7) Though a thousand may fall beside you, and a
multitude on your right side, it¹² will not reach you.

(Psa 91:8) Certainly you will see it with your very own eyes
— you will see the wicked paid back.¹³

(Psa 91:9) For you have taken refuge in the LORD, my
shelter, the sovereign One.¹⁴

(Psa 91:10) No harm will overtake¹⁵ you;
no illness¹⁶ will come near your home.¹⁷

(Psa 91:11) For he will order his angels¹⁸ to protect you in all you do.¹⁹

(Psa 91:12) They will lift you up in their hands, so you will not slip and fall on a stone.²⁰

(Psa 91:13) You will subdue²¹ a lion and a snake;²² you will trample underfoot a young lion and a serpent.

(Psa 91:14) The LORD says,²³
“Because he is devoted to me, I will deliver him; I will protect him²⁴ because he is loyal to me.²⁵

(Psa 91:15) When he calls out to me, I will answer him. I will be with him when he is in trouble; I will rescue him and bring him honor.

(Psa 91:16) I will satisfy him with long life,²⁶ and will let him see my salvation.

(Psa 92:1) Psalm 92

A psalm; a song for the Sabbath day.

It is fitting² to thank the LORD,
and to sing praises to your name, O sovereign One!³

(Psa 92:2) It is fitting⁴ to proclaim your loyal love in the morning, and your faithfulness during the night,

(Psa 92:3) to the accompaniment of a ten-stringed instrument and a lyre, to the accompaniment of the meditative tone of the harp.

(Psa 92:4) For you, O LORD, have made me happy by your work.

I will sing for joy because of what you have done.⁵

(Psa 92:5) How great are your works, O LORD!
Your plans are very intricate!⁶

(Psa 92:6) The spiritually insensitive do not recognize this;
the fool does not understand this.⁷

(Psa 92:7) When the wicked sprout up like grass, and all the
evildoers glisten,⁸
it is so that they may be annihilated.⁹ (Psa 92:8) But you, O
LORD, reign¹⁰ forever!

(Psa 92:9) Indeed,¹¹ look at your enemies, O LORD!
Indeed,¹² look at how your enemies perish! All the evildoers
are scattered!

(Psa 92:10) You exalt my horn like that of a wild ox.¹³
I am covered¹⁴ with fresh oil.

(Psa 92:11) I gloat in triumph over those who tried to
ambush me;¹⁵
I hear the defeated cries of the evil foes who attacked me.¹⁶

(Psa 92:12) The godly¹⁷ grow like a palm tree;
they grow high like a cedar in Lebanon.¹⁸

(Psa 92:13) Planted in the LORD's house, they grow in the
courts of our God.

(Psa 92:14) They bear fruit even when they are old;
they are filled with vitality and have many leaves.¹⁹

(Psa 92:15) So they proclaim that the LORD, my protector, is
just and never unfair.²⁰

(Psa 93:1) Psalm 93¹

The LORD reigns!
He is robed in majesty, the LORD is robed,

he wears strength around his waist.²
Indeed, the world is established, it cannot be moved.

(Psa 93:2) Your throne has been secure from ancient times;
you have always been king.³

(Psa 93:3) The waves⁴ roar, O LORD, the waves roar,
the waves roar and crash.⁵

(Psa 93:4) Above the sound of the surging water,⁶ and the
mighty waves of the sea, the LORD sits enthroned in
majesty.⁷

(Psa 93:5) The rules you set down⁸ are completely reliable.⁹
Holiness¹⁰ aptly adorns your house, O LORD, forever.¹¹
(Psa 94:1) Psalm 94¹

O LORD, the God who avenges!
O God who avenges, reveal your splendor!²

(Psa 94:2) Rise up, O judge of the earth!
Pay back the proud!

(Psa 94:3) O LORD, how long will the wicked, how long will
the wicked celebrate?³

(Psa 94:4) They spew out threats⁴ and speak defiantly;
all the evildoers boast.⁵

(Psa 94:5) O LORD, they crush your people;
they oppress the nation that belongs to you.⁶

(Psa 94:6) They kill the widow and the one residing outside
his native land, and they murder the fatherless.⁷

(Psa 94:7) Then they say, "The LORD does not see this;

the God of Jacob does not take notice of it.”⁸

(Psa 94:8) Take notice of this,⁹ you ignorant people!¹⁰
You fools, when will you ever understand?

(Psa 94:9) Does the one who makes the human ear not hear?
Does the one who forms the human eye not see?¹¹

(Psa 94:10) Does the one who disciplines the nations not
punish?
He is the one who imparts knowledge to human beings!

(Psa 94:11) The LORD knows that
peoples’ thoughts are morally bankrupt.¹²

(Psa 94:12) How blessed is the one¹³ whom you instruct, O
LORD, the one whom you teach from your law,
(Psa 94:13) in order to protect him from times of trouble,¹⁴
until the wicked are destroyed.¹⁵

(Psa 94:14) Certainly¹⁶ the LORD does not forsake his
people; he does not abandon the nation that belongs to
him.¹⁷

(Psa 94:15) For justice will prevail,¹⁸
and all the morally upright¹⁹ will be vindicated.²⁰

(Psa 94:16) Who will rise up to defend me²¹ against the
wicked?
Who will stand up for me against the evildoers?²²

(Psa 94:17) If the LORD had not helped me,
I would have laid down in the silence of death.²³

(Psa 94:18) If I say, “My foot is slipping,”
your loyal love, O LORD, supports me.

(Psa 94:19) When worries threaten to overwhelm me,²⁴ your soothing touch makes me happy.²⁵

(Psa 94:20) Cruel rulers²⁶ are not your allies, those who make oppressive laws.²⁷

(Psa 94:21) They conspire against²⁸ the blameless,²⁹ and condemn to death the innocent.³⁰

(Psa 94:22) But the LORD will protect me,³¹ and my God will shelter me.³²

(Psa 94:23) He will pay them back for their sin.³³
He will destroy them because of³⁴ their evil;
the LORD our God will destroy them.
(Psa 95:1) Psalm 95¹

Come! Let's sing for joy to the LORD!
Let's shout out praises to our protector who delivers us!²

(Psa 95:2) Let's enter his presence³ with thanksgiving!
Let's shout out to him in celebration!⁴

(Psa 95:3) For the LORD is a great God,
a great king who is superior to⁵ all gods.

(Psa 95:4) The depths of the earth are in his hand,⁶ and the mountain peaks belong to him.

(Psa 95:5) The sea is his, for he made it.
His hands formed the dry land.

(Psa 95:6) Come! Let's bow down and worship!⁷
Let's kneel before the LORD, our creator!

(Psa 95:7) For he is our God;

we are the people of his pasture, the sheep he owns.⁸
Today, if only you would obey him!⁹

(Psa 95:8) He says,¹⁰ “Do not be stubborn like they were at Meribah,¹¹ like they were that day at Massah¹² in the wilderness,¹³

(Psa 95:9) where your ancestors challenged my authority,¹⁴ and tried my patience, even though they had seen my work.

(Psa 95:10) For forty years I was continually disgusted¹⁵ with that generation, and I said, ‘These people desire to go astray;¹⁶
they do not obey my commands.’¹⁷

(Psa 95:11) So I made a vow in my anger,
‘They will never enter into the resting place I had set aside for them.’ “¹⁸

(Psa 96:1) Psalm 96¹

Sing to the LORD a new song!²
Sing to the LORD, all the earth!

(Psa 96:2) Sing to the LORD! Praise his name!
Announce every day how he delivers!³

(Psa 96:3) Tell the nations about his splendor!
Tell⁴ all the nations about his amazing deeds!

(Psa 96:4) For the LORD is great and certainly worthy of praise; he is more awesome than all gods.⁵

(Psa 96:5) For all the gods of the nations are worthless,⁶ but the LORD made the sky.

(Psa 96:6) Majestic splendor emanates from him;⁷

his sanctuary is firmly established and beautiful.⁸

(Psa 96:7) Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the nations,
ascribe to the LORD splendor and strength!

(Psa 96:8) Ascribe to the LORD the splendor he deserves!⁹
Bring an offering and enter his courts!

(Psa 96:9) Worship the LORD in holy attire!¹⁰
Tremble before him, all the earth!

(Psa 96:10) Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns!
The world is established, it cannot be moved. He judges the
nations fairly."

(Psa 96:11) Let the sky rejoice, and the earth be happy!
Let the sea and everything in it shout!

(Psa 96:12) Let the fields and everything in them celebrate!
Then let the trees of the forest shout with joy

(Psa 96:13) before the LORD, for he comes!
For he comes to judge the earth! He judges the world
fairly,¹¹
and the nations in accordance with his justice.¹²

(Psa 97:1) Psalm 97¹

The LORD reigns!
Let the earth be happy!
Let the many coastlands rejoice!

(Psa 97:2) Dark clouds surround him;
equity and justice are the foundation of his throne.²

(Psa 97:3) Fire goes before him;
on every side³ it burns up his enemies.

(Psa 97:4) His lightning bolts light up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.

(Psa 97:5) The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,
before the Lord of the whole earth.

(Psa 97:6) The sky declares his justice,
and all the nations see his splendor.

(Psa 97:7) All who worship idols are ashamed, those who
boast about worthless idols. All the gods bow down before
him.⁴

(Psa 97:8) Zion hears and rejoices,
the towns⁵ of Judah are happy, because of your judgments,
O LORD.

(Psa 97:9) For you, O LORD, are the sovereign king⁶ over the
whole earth; you are elevated high above all gods.

(Psa 97:10) You who love the LORD, hate evil!
He protects⁷ the lives of his faithful followers;
he delivers them from the power⁸ of the wicked.

(Psa 97:11) The godly bask in the light;
the morally upright experience joy.⁹

(Psa 97:12) You godly ones, rejoice in the LORD!
Give thanks to his holy name.¹⁰

(Psa 98:1) Psalm 98¹

A psalm.

Sing to the LORD a new song,² for he performs³ amazing
deeds! His right hand and his mighty arm accomplish

deliverance.⁴

(Psa 98:2) The LORD demonstrates his power to deliver;⁵ in the sight of the nations he reveals his justice.

(Psa 98:3) He remains loyal and faithful to the family of Israel.⁶

All the ends of the earth see our God deliver us.⁷

(Psa 98:4) Shout out praises to the LORD, all the earth!
Break out in a joyful shout and sing!

(Psa 98:5) Sing to the LORD accompanied by a harp,
accompanied by a harp and the sound of music!

(Psa 98:6) With trumpets and the blaring of the ram's horn,
shout out praises before the king, the LORD!

(Psa 98:7) Let the sea and everything in it shout, along with
the world and those who live in it!

(Psa 98:8) Let the rivers clap their hands!
Let the mountains sing in unison

(Psa 98:9) before the LORD!
For he comes to judge the earth! He judges the world fairly,⁸
and the nations in a just manner.

(Psa 99:1) Psalm 99

The LORD reigns!

The nations tremble.²

He sits enthroned above the winged angels;³ the earth
shakes.⁴

(Psa 99:2) The LORD is elevated⁵ in Zion;
he is exalted over all the nations.

(Psa 99:3) Let them praise your great and awesome name!
He⁶ is holy!

(Psa 99:4) The king is strong;
he loves justice.⁷
You ensure that legal decisions will be made fairly;⁸ you
promote justice and equity in Jacob.

(Psa 99:5) Praise⁹ the LORD our God!
Worship¹⁰ before his footstool! He is holy!

(Psa 99:6) Moses and Aaron were among his priests; Samuel
was one of those who prayed to him.¹¹
They¹² prayed to the LORD and he answered them.

(Psa 99:7) He spoke to them from a pillar of cloud;¹³
they obeyed his regulations and the ordinance he gave
them.

(Psa 99:8) O LORD our God, you answered them.
They found you to be a forgiving God,
but also one who punished their sinful deeds.¹⁴

(Psa 99:9) Praise¹⁵ the LORD our God!
Worship on his holy hill,
for the LORD our God is holy!
(Psa 100:1) Psalm 100

A thanksgiving psalm.
Shout out praises to the LORD, all the earth! (Psa 100:2)
Worship² the LORD with joy!
Enter his presence with joyful singing!

(Psa 100:3) Acknowledge that the LORD is God!
He made us and we belong to him;³

we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

(Psa 100:4) Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!

Give him thanks! Praise his name!

(Psa 100:5) For the LORD is good.

His loyal love endures,⁴

and he is faithful through all generations.⁵

(Psa 101:1) Psalm 101

A psalm of David.

I will sing about loyalty and justice! To you, O LORD, I will sing praises!

(Psa 101:2) I will walk in² the way of integrity.

When will you come to me?

I will conduct my business with integrity in the midst of my palace.³

(Psa 101:3) I will not even consider doing what is dishonest.⁴

I hate doing evil;⁵

I will have no part of it.⁶

(Psa 101:4) I will have nothing to do with a perverse person;⁷

I will not permit⁸ evil.

(Psa 101:5) I will destroy anyone who slanders his neighbor in secret.

I will not tolerate anyone who has a cocky demeanor and an arrogant attitude.⁹

(Psa 101:6) I will favor the honest people of the land,¹⁰ and allow them to live with me.¹¹

Those who walk in the way of integrity will attend me.¹²

(Psa 101:7) Deceitful people will not live in my palace.¹³

Liars will not be welcome in my presence.¹⁴

(Psa 101:8) Each morning I will destroy all the wicked people in the land, and remove all evildoers from the city of the LORD.

(Psa 102:1) Psalm 102¹

The prayer of an oppressed man, as he grows faint and pours out his lament before the LORD.

O LORD, hear my prayer!

Pay attention to my cry for help!²

(Psa 102:2) Do not ignore me in my time of trouble!³

Listen to me!⁴

When I call out to you, quickly answer me!

(Psa 102:3) For my days go up in smoke,⁵
and my bones are charred like a fireplace.⁶

(Psa 102:4) My heart is parched⁷ and withered like grass, for I am unable⁸ to eat food.⁹

(Psa 102:5) Because of the anxiety that makes me groan, my bones protrude from my skin.¹⁰

(Psa 102:6) I am like an owl¹¹ in the wilderness;
I am like a screech owl¹² among the ruins.¹³

(Psa 102:7) I stay awake;¹⁴
I am like a solitary bird on a roof.

(Psa 102:8) All day long my enemies taunt me;
those who mock me use my name in their curses.¹⁵

(Psa 102:9) For I eat ashes as if they were bread,¹⁶ and mix
my drink with my tears,¹⁷

(Psa 102:10) because of your anger and raging fury.
Indeed,¹⁸ you pick me up and throw me away.

(Psa 102:11) My days are coming to an end,¹⁹ and I am
withered like grass.

(Psa 102:12) But you, O LORD, rule forever,²⁰ and your
reputation endures.²¹

(Psa 102:13) You will rise up and have compassion on
Zion.²²
For it is time to have mercy on her, for the appointed time
has come.

(Psa 102:14) Indeed,²³ your servants take delight in her
stones, and feel compassion for²⁴ the dust of her ruins.²⁵

(Psa 102:15) The nations will respect the reputation of the
LORD,²⁶ and all the kings of the earth will respect²⁷ his
splendor,

(Psa 102:16) when the LORD rebuilds Zion, and reveals his
splendor,

(Psa 102:17) when he responds to the prayer of the
destitute,²⁸
and does not reject²⁹ their request.³⁰

(Psa 102:18) The account of his intervention³¹ will be
recorded for future generations; people yet to be born will
praise the LORD.

(Psa 102:19) For he will look down from his sanctuary above;³² from heaven the LORD will look toward earth,³³

(Psa 102:20) in order to hear the painful cries of the prisoners, and to set free those condemned to die,³⁴

(Psa 102:21) so they may proclaim the name of the LORD in Zion, and praise him³⁵ in Jerusalem,³⁶

(Psa 102:22) when the nations gather together, and the kingdoms pay tribute to the LORD.³⁷

(Psa 102:23) He has taken away my strength in the middle of life;³⁸ he has cut short my days.

(Psa 102:24) I say, "O my God, please do not take me away in the middle of my life!³⁹
You endure through all generations.⁴⁰

(Psa 102:25) In earlier times you established the earth; the skies are your handiwork.

(Psa 102:26) They will perish, but you will endure.⁴¹
They will wear out like a garment;
like clothes you will remove them and they will disappear.⁴²

(Psa 102:27) But you remain;⁴³
your years do not come to an end.

(Psa 102:28) The children of your servants will settle down here, and their descendants⁴⁴ will live securely in your presence."⁴⁵

(Psa 103:1) Psalm 103¹

By David.

Praise the LORD, O my soul!
With all that is within me, praise² his holy name!

(Psa 103:2) Praise the LORD, O my soul!
Do not forget all his kind deeds!³

(Psa 103:3) He is the one who forgives all your sins, who
heals all your diseases,⁴

(Psa 103:4) who delivers⁵ your life from the Pit,⁶
who crowns you with his loyal love and compassion,

(Psa 103:5) who satisfies your life with good things,⁷ so your
youth is renewed like an eagle's.⁸

(Psa 103:6) The LORD does what is fair,
and executes justice for all the oppressed.⁹

(Psa 103:7) The LORD revealed his faithful acts¹⁰ to Moses,
his deeds to the Israelites.

(Psa 103:8) The LORD is compassionate and merciful;
he is patient¹¹ and demonstrates great loyal love.¹²

(Psa 103:9) He does not always accuse, and does not stay
angry.¹³

(Psa 103:10) He does not deal with us as our sins deserve;¹⁴
he does not repay us as our misdeeds deserve.¹⁵

(Psa 103:11) For as the skies are high above the earth,
so his loyal love towers¹⁶ over his faithful followers.¹⁷

(Psa 103:12) As far as the eastern horizon¹⁸ is from the
west,¹⁹

so he removes the guilt of our rebellious actions²⁰ from us.

(Psa 103:13) As a father has compassion on his children,²¹
so the LORD has compassion on his faithful followers.²²

(Psa 103:14) For he knows what we are made of;²³ he
realizes²⁴ we are made of clay.²⁵

(Psa 103:15) A person's life is like grass.²⁶
Like a flower in the field it flourishes,

(Psa 103:16) but when the hot wind²⁷ blows by, it
disappears, and one can no longer even spot the place
where it once grew.

(Psa 103:17) But the LORD continually shows loyal love to
his faithful followers,²⁸ and is faithful to their
descendants,²⁹

(Psa 103:18) to those who keep his covenant, who are
careful to obey his commands.³⁰

(Psa 103:19) The LORD has established his throne in
heaven; his kingdom extends over everything.³¹

(Psa 103:20) Praise the LORD, you angels of his,
you powerful warriors who carry out his decrees and obey
his orders!³²

(Psa 103:21) Praise the LORD, all you warriors of his,³³ you
servants of his who carry out his desires!³⁴

(Psa 103:22) Praise the LORD, all that he has made,³⁵ in all
the regions³⁶ of his kingdom!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

(Psa 104:1) Psalm 104¹

Praise the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD my God, you are magnificent.²
You are robed in splendor and majesty.

(Psa 104:2) He covers himself with light as if it were a garment.
He stretches out the skies like a tent curtain,

(Psa 104:3) and lays the beams of the upper rooms of his palace on the rain clouds.³
He makes the clouds his chariot,
and travels along on the wings of the wind.⁴

(Psa 104:4) He makes the winds his messengers, and the flaming fire his attendant.⁵

(Psa 104:5) He established the earth on its foundations;
it will never be upended.

(Psa 104:6) The watery deep covered it⁶ like a garment;
the waters reached⁷ above the mountains.⁸

(Psa 104:7) Your shout made the waters retreat;
at the sound of your thunderous voice they hurried off —

(Psa 104:8) as the mountains rose up, and the valleys went down — to the place you appointed for them.⁹

(Psa 104:9) You set up a boundary for them that they could not cross, so that they would not cover the earth again.¹⁰

(Psa 104:10) He turns springs into streams;¹¹ they flow between the mountains.

(Psa 104:11) They provide water for all the animals in the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

(Psa 104:12) The birds of the sky live beside them;
they chirp among the bushes.¹²

(Psa 104:13) He waters the mountains from the upper rooms
of his palace;¹³ the earth is full of the fruit you cause to
grow.¹⁴

(Psa 104:14) He provides grass¹⁵ for the cattle, and crops
for people to cultivate,¹⁶
so they can produce food from the ground,¹⁷

(Psa 104:15) as well as wine that makes people feel so
good,¹⁸ and so they can have oil to make their faces
shine,¹⁹
as well as food that sustains people's lives.²⁰

(Psa 104:16) The trees of the LORD²¹ receive all the rain
they need,²² the cedars of Lebanon which he planted,
(Psa 104:17) where the birds make nests,
near the evergreens in which the herons live.²³

(Psa 104:18) The wild goats live in the high mountains;²⁴
the rock badgers find safety in the cliffs.

(Psa 104:19) He made the moon to mark the months,²⁵ and
the sun sets according to a regular schedule.²⁶

(Psa 104:20) You make it dark and night comes,²⁷
during which all the beasts of the forest prowl around.

(Psa 104:21) The lions roar for prey, seeking their food from
God.²⁸

(Psa 104:22) When the sun rises, they withdraw and sleep²⁹
in their dens.

(Psa 104:23) Men then go out to do their work, and labor away until evening.³⁰

(Psa 104:24) How many living things you have made, O LORD!³¹

You have exhibited great skill in making all of them;³² the earth is full of the living things you have made.

(Psa 104:25) Over here is the deep, wide sea,³³ which teems with innumerable swimming creatures,³⁴ living things both small and large.

(Psa 104:26) The ships travel there, and over here swims the whale³⁵ you made to play in it.

(Psa 104:27) All of your creatures³⁶ wait for you to provide them with food on a regular basis.³⁷

(Psa 104:28) You give food to them and they receive it; you open your hand and they are filled with food.³⁸

(Psa 104:29) When you ignore them, they panic.³⁹ When you take away their life's breath, they die and return to dust.

(Psa 104:30) When you send your life-giving breath, they are created, and you replenish the surface of the ground.

(Psa 104:31) May the splendor of the LORD endure!⁴⁰ May the LORD find pleasure in the living things he has made!⁴¹

(Psa 104:32) He looks down on the earth and it shakes; he touches the mountains and they start to smolder.

(Psa 104:33) I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I exist!⁴²

(Psa 104:34) May my thoughts⁴³ be pleasing to him!
I will rejoice in the LORD.

(Psa 104:35) May sinners disappear⁴⁴ from the earth, and
the wicked vanish!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

Praise the LORD!

(Psa 105:1) Psalm 105¹

Give thanks to the LORD! Call on his name!
Make known his accomplishments among the nations!

(Psa 105:2) Sing to him!
Make music to him!
Tell about all his miraculous deeds!

(Psa 105:3) Boast about his holy name!
Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

(Psa 105:4) Seek the LORD and the strength he gives!
Seek his presence continually!

(Psa 105:5) Recall the miraculous deeds he performed, his
mighty acts and the judgments he decreed,²

(Psa 105:6) O children³ of Abraham,⁴ God's⁵ servant, you
descendants⁶ of Jacob, God's⁷ chosen ones!

(Psa 105:7) He is the LORD our God;
he carries out judgment throughout the earth.⁸

(Psa 105:8) He always remembers his covenantal decree,
the promise he made⁹ to a thousand generations —

(Psa 105:9) the promise¹⁰ he made to Abraham, the promise he made by oath to Isaac!

(Psa 105:10) He gave it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as a lasting promise,¹¹

(Psa 105:11) saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion of your inheritance.”

(Psa 105:12) When they were few in number, just a very few, and resident aliens within it,

(Psa 105:13) they wandered from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another.¹²

(Psa 105:14) He let no one oppress them; he disciplined kings for their sake,

(Psa 105:15) saying,¹³ “Don’t touch my chosen¹⁴ ones! Don’t harm my prophets!”

(Psa 105:16) He called down a famine upon the earth; he cut off all the food supply.¹⁵

(Psa 105:17) He sent a man ahead of them¹⁶ — Joseph was sold as a servant.

(Psa 105:18) The shackles hurt his feet;¹⁷ his neck was placed in an iron collar,¹⁸

(Psa 105:19) until the time when his prediction¹⁹ came true.

The LORD’s word²⁰ proved him right.²¹

(Psa 105:20) The king authorized his release;²² the ruler of nations set him free.

(Psa 105:21) He put him in charge of his palace,²³ and made him manager of all his property,
(Psa 105:22) giving him authority to imprison his officials²⁴ and to teach his advisers.²⁵

(Psa 105:23) Israel moved to²⁶ Egypt;
Jacob lived for a time²⁷ in the land of Ham.

(Psa 105:24) The LORD²⁸ made his people very fruitful,
and made them²⁹ more numerous than their³⁰ enemies.

(Psa 105:25) He caused them³¹ to hate his people, and to mistreat³² his servants.

(Psa 105:26) He sent his servant Moses, and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

(Psa 105:27) They executed his miraculous signs among them,³³ and his amazing deeds in the land of Ham.

(Psa 105:28) He made it dark;³⁴
they did not disobey his orders.³⁵

(Psa 105:29) He turned their water into blood, and killed their fish.

(Psa 105:30) Their land was overrun by frogs,
which even got into the rooms of their kings.

(Psa 105:31) He ordered flies to come;³⁶ gnats invaded their whole territory.

(Psa 105:32) He sent hail along with the rain;³⁷ there was lightning in their land.³⁸

(Psa 105:33) He destroyed their vines and fig trees, and broke the trees throughout their territory.

(Psa 105:34) He ordered locusts to come,³⁹ innumerable grasshoppers.

(Psa 105:35) They ate all the vegetation in their land, and devoured the crops of their fields.⁴⁰

(Psa 105:36) He struck down all the firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of their reproductive power.⁴¹

(Psa 105:37) He brought his people⁴² out enriched⁴³ with silver and gold; none of his tribes stumbled.

(Psa 105:38) Egypt was happy when they left, for they were afraid of them.⁴⁴

(Psa 105:39) He spread out a cloud for a cover,⁴⁵ and provided a fire to light up the night.

(Psa 105:40) They asked for food,⁴⁶ and he sent quails; he satisfied them with food from the sky.⁴⁷

(Psa 105:41) He opened up a rock and water flowed out; a river ran through dry regions.

(Psa 105:42) Yes,⁴⁸ he remembered the sacred promise⁴⁹ he made to Abraham his servant.

(Psa 105:43) When he led his people out, they rejoiced; his chosen ones shouted with joy.⁵⁰

(Psa 105:44) He handed the territory of nations over to them, and they took possession of what other peoples had produced,⁵¹

(Psa 105:45) so that they might keep his commands and obey⁵² his laws.

Praise the LORD!

(Psa 106:1) Psalm 106¹

Praise the LORD!

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, and his loyal love endures!²

(Psa 106:2) Who can adequately recount the LORD's mighty acts, or relate all his praiseworthy deeds?³

(Psa 106:3) How blessed are those who promote justice, and do what is right all the time!

(Psa 106:4) Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people!

Pay attention to me, when you deliver,

(Psa 106:5) so I may see the prosperity⁴ of your chosen ones, rejoice along with your nation,⁵

and boast along with the people who belong to you.⁶

(Psa 106:6) We have sinned like⁷ our ancestors;⁸ we have done wrong, we have done evil.

(Psa 106:7) Our ancestors in Egypt failed to appreciate your miraculous deeds, they failed to remember your many acts of loyal love, and they rebelled at the sea, by the Red Sea.⁹

(Psa 106:8) Yet he delivered them for the sake of his reputation,¹⁰ that he might reveal his power.

(Psa 106:9) He shouted at¹¹ the Red Sea and it dried up; he led them through the deep water as if it were a desert.

(Psa 106:10) He delivered them from the power¹² of the one who hated them, and rescued¹³ them from the power¹⁴ of the enemy.

(Psa 106:11) The water covered their enemies;
not even one of them survived.¹⁵

(Psa 106:12) They believed his promises;¹⁶ they sang praises to him.

(Psa 106:13) They quickly forgot what he had done;¹⁷ they did not wait for his instructions.¹⁸

(Psa 106:14) In the wilderness they had an insatiable craving¹⁹ for meat;²⁰ they challenged God²¹ in the desert.

(Psa 106:15) He granted their request, then struck them with a disease.²²

(Psa 106:16) In the camp they resented²³ Moses, and Aaron, the LORD's holy priest.²⁴

(Psa 106:17) The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan;
it engulfed²⁵ the group led by Abiram.²⁶

(Psa 106:18) Fire burned their group;
the flames scorched the wicked.²⁷

(Psa 106:19) They made an image of a calf at Horeb, and worshiped a metal idol.

(Psa 106:20) They traded their majestic God²⁸ for the image of an ox that eats grass.

(Psa 106:21) They rejected²⁹ the God who delivered them, the one who performed great deeds in Egypt,

(Psa 106:22) amazing feats in the land of Ham, mighty³⁰ acts by the Red Sea.

(Psa 106:23) He threatened³¹ to destroy them, but³² Moses, his chosen one, interceded with him³³ and turned back his destructive anger.³⁴

(Psa 106:24) They rejected the fruitful land;³⁵ they did not believe his promise.³⁶

(Psa 106:25) They grumbled in their tents;³⁷ they did not obey³⁸ the LORD.

(Psa 106:26) So he made a solemn vow³⁹ that he would make them die⁴⁰ in the desert,

(Psa 106:27) make their descendants⁴¹ die⁴² among the nations, and scatter them among foreign lands.⁴³

(Psa 106:28) They worshiped⁴⁴ Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead.⁴⁵

(Psa 106:29) They made the LORD angry⁴⁶ by their actions, and a plague broke out among them.

(Psa 106:30) Phinehas took a stand and intervened,⁴⁷ and the plague subsided.

(Psa 106:31) This brought him a reward, an eternal gift.⁴⁸

(Psa 106:32) They made him angry by the waters of Meribah, and Moses suffered⁴⁹ because of them,

(Psa 106:33) for they aroused⁵⁰ his temper,⁵¹ and he spoke rashly.⁵²

(Psa 106:34) They did not destroy the nations,⁵³ as the LORD had commanded them to do.

(Psa 106:35) They mixed in with the nations and learned their ways.⁵⁴

(Psa 106:36) They worshiped⁵⁵ their idols, which became a snare to them.⁵⁶

(Psa 106:37) They sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons.⁵⁷ (Psa 106:38) They shed innocent blood — the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan. The land was polluted by bloodshed.⁵⁸

(Psa 106:39) They were defiled by their deeds, and unfaithful in their actions.⁵⁹

(Psa 106:40) So the LORD was angry with his people⁶⁰ and despised the people who belong to him.⁶¹

(Psa 106:41) He handed them over to⁶² the nations, and those who hated them ruled over them.

(Psa 106:42) Their enemies oppressed them; they were subject to their authority.⁶³

(Psa 106:43) Many times he delivered⁶⁴ them, but they had a rebellious attitude,⁶⁵ and degraded themselves⁶⁶ by their sin.

(Psa 106:44) Yet he took notice of their distress, when he heard their cry for help.

(Psa 106:45) He remembered his covenant with them, and relented⁶⁷ because of his great loyal love.

(Psa 106:46) He caused all their conquerors⁶⁸ to have pity on them.

(Psa 106:47) Deliver us, O LORD, our God!
Gather us from among the nations!
Then we will give thanks⁶⁹ to your holy name, and boast about your praiseworthy deeds.⁷⁰

(Psa 106:48) The LORD God of Israel deserves praise,⁷¹ in the future and forevermore.⁷²

Let all the people say, “We agree!⁷³ Praise the LORD!”⁷⁴

(Psa 107:1) Book 5

(Psalms 107 — 150)

Psalm 107

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, and his loyal love endures!²

(Psa 107:2) Let those delivered by the LORD speak out,³ those whom he delivered⁴ from the power⁵ of the enemy,

(Psa 107:3) and gathered from foreign lands,⁶ from east and west, from north and south.

(Psa 107:4) They wandered through the wilderness on a desert road; they found no city in which to live.

(Psa 107:5) They were hungry and thirsty; they fainted from exhaustion.⁷

(Psa 107:6) They cried out to the LORD in their distress; he delivered them from their troubles.

(Psa 107:7) He led them on a level road,⁸ that they might find a city in which to live.

(Psa 107:8) Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!⁹

(Psa 107:9) For he has satisfied those who thirst,¹⁰ and those who hunger he has filled with food.¹¹

(Psa 107:10) They sat in utter darkness,¹² bound in painful iron chains,¹³

(Psa 107:11) because they had rebelled against God's commands,¹⁴ and rejected the instructions of the sovereign king.¹⁵

(Psa 107:12) So he used suffering to humble them;¹⁶ they stumbled and no one helped them up.

(Psa 107:13) They cried out to the LORD in their distress; he delivered them from their troubles.

(Psa 107:14) He brought them out of the utter darkness,¹⁷ and tore off their shackles.

(Psa 107:15) Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!¹⁸

(Psa 107:16) For he shattered the bronze gates, and hacked through the iron bars.¹⁹

(Psa 107:17) They acted like fools in their rebellious ways,²⁰ and suffered because of their sins.

(Psa 107:18) They lost their appetite for all food,²¹ and they drew near the gates of death.

(Psa 107:19) They cried out to the LORD in their distress; he delivered them from their troubles.

(Psa 107:20) He sent them an assuring word²² and healed them; he rescued them from the pits where they were trapped.²³

(Psa 107:21) Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!²⁴

(Psa 107:22) Let them present thank offerings, and loudly proclaim what he has done!²⁵

(Psa 107:23) ²⁶ Some traveled on²⁷ the sea in ships, and carried cargo over the vast waters.²⁸

(Psa 107:24) They witnessed the acts of the LORD, his amazing feats on the deep water.

(Psa 107:25) He gave the order for a windstorm,²⁹ and it stirred up the waves of the sea.³⁰

(Psa 107:26) They³¹ reached up to the sky, then dropped into the depths.

The sailors' strength³² left them³³ because the danger was so great.³⁴

(Psa 107:27) They swayed³⁵ and staggered like a drunk, and all their skill proved ineffective.³⁶

(Psa 107:28) They cried out to the LORD in their distress; he delivered them from their troubles.

(Psa 107:29) He calmed the storm,³⁷ and the waves³⁸ grew silent.

(Psa 107:30) The sailors³⁹ rejoiced because the waves⁴⁰ grew quiet, and he led them to the harbor⁴¹ they desired.

(Psa 107:31) Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!⁴²

(Psa 107:32) Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people!

Let them praise him in the place where the leaders preside!⁴³

(Psa 107:33) He turned⁴⁴ streams into a desert, springs of water into arid land,

(Psa 107:34) and a fruitful land into a barren place,⁴⁵ because of the sin of its inhabitants.

(Psa 107:35) As for his people,⁴⁶ he turned⁴⁷ a desert into a pool of water, and a dry land into springs of water.

(Psa 107:36) He allowed the hungry to settle there, and they established a city in which to live.

(Psa 107:37) They cultivated⁴⁸ fields, and planted vineyards, which yielded a harvest of fruit.⁴⁹

(Psa 107:38) He blessed⁵⁰ them so that they became very numerous.

He would not allow their cattle to decrease in number.⁵¹

(Psa 107:39) As for their enemies,⁵² they decreased in number and were beaten down, because of painful distress⁵³ and suffering.

(Psa 107:40) He would pour⁵⁴ contempt upon princes, and he made them wander in a wasteland with no road.

(Psa 107:41) Yet he protected⁵⁵ the needy from oppression, and cared for his families like a flock of sheep.

(Psa 107:42) When the godly see this, they rejoice, and every sinner⁵⁶ shuts his mouth.

(Psa 107:43) Whoever is wise, let him take note of these things!

Let them consider the LORD's acts of loyal love!

(Psa 108:1) Psalm 108¹

A song, a psalm of David.

I am determined,² O God!

I will sing and praise you with my whole heart.³

(Psa 108:2) Awake, O stringed instrument and harp!

I will wake up at dawn!⁴

(Psa 108:3) I will give you thanks before the nations, O LORD!

I will sing praises to you before foreigners!⁵

(Psa 108:4) For your loyal love extends beyond the sky,⁶ and your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

(Psa 108:5) Rise up⁷ above the sky, O God!

May your splendor cover the whole earth!⁸

(Psa 108:6) Deliver by your power⁹ and answer me, so that the ones you love may be safe.¹⁰

(Psa 108:7) God has spoken in his sanctuary:¹¹

"I will triumph! I will parcel out Shechem, the valley of Succoth I will measure off.¹²

(Psa 108:8) Gilead belongs to me, as does Manasseh!¹³

Ephraim is my helmet,¹⁴

Judah my royal scepter.¹⁵

(Psa 108:9) Moab is my washbasin.¹⁶
I will make Edom serve me.¹⁷
I will shout in triumph over Philistia.”

(Psa 108:10) Who will lead me into the fortified city?
Who will bring me to Edom?¹⁸

(Psa 108:11) Have you not rejected us, O God?
O God, you do not go into battle with our armies.

(Psa 108:12) Give us help against the enemy, for any help
men might offer is futile.¹⁹

(Psa 108:13) By God’s power we will conquer;²⁰ he will
trample down²¹ our enemies.

(Psa 109:1) Psalm 109¹

For the music director, a psalm of David.

O God whom I praise, do not ignore me!²

(Psa 109:2) For they say cruel and deceptive things to me;
they lie to me.³

(Psa 109:3) They surround me and say hateful things;⁴ they
attack me for no reason.

(Psa 109:4) They repay my love with accusations,⁵ but I
continue to pray.⁶

(Psa 109:5) They repay me evil for good,⁷ and hate for love.

(Psa 109:6) ⁸ Appoint an evil man to testify against him!⁹
May an accuser stand¹⁰ at his right side!

(Psa 109:7) When he is judged, he will be found¹¹ guilty!¹²
Then his prayer will be regarded as sinful.

(Psa 109:8) May his days be few!¹³
May another take his job!¹⁴

(Psa 109:9) May his children¹⁵ be fatherless, and his wife a widow!

(Psa 109:10) May his children¹⁶ roam around begging, asking for handouts as they leave their ruined home!¹⁷

(Psa 109:11) May the creditor seize¹⁸ all he owns!
May strangers loot his property!¹⁹

(Psa 109:12) May no one show him kindness!²⁰
May no one have compassion²¹ on his fatherless children!

(Psa 109:13) May his descendants²² be cut off!²³
May the memory of them be wiped out by the time the next generation arrives!²⁴

(Psa 109:14) May his ancestors'²⁵ sins be remembered by the LORD!
May his mother's sin not be forgotten!²⁶

(Psa 109:15) May the LORD be constantly aware of them,²⁷ and cut off the memory of his children²⁸ from the earth!

(Psa 109:16) For he never bothered to show kindness;²⁹ he harassed the oppressed and needy, and killed the disheartened.³⁰

(Psa 109:17) He loved to curse³¹ others, so those curses have come upon him.³²

He had no desire to bless anyone, so he has experienced no blessings.³³

(Psa 109:18) He made cursing a way of life,³⁴
so curses poured into his stomach like water and seeped into his bones like oil.³⁵

(Psa 109:19) May a curse attach itself to him, like a garment one puts on,³⁶ or a belt³⁷ one wears continually!

(Psa 109:20) May the LORD repay my accusers in this way,³⁸ those who say evil things about³⁹ me!⁴⁰

(Psa 109:21) O sovereign LORD,
intervene on my behalf for the sake of your reputation!⁴¹
Because your loyal love is good, deliver me!

(Psa 109:22) For I am oppressed and needy,
and my heart beats violently within me.⁴²

(Psa 109:23) I am fading away like a shadow at the end of the day;⁴³
I am shaken off like a locust.

(Psa 109:24) I am so starved my knees shake;⁴⁴
I have turned into skin and bones.⁴⁵

(Psa 109:25) I am disdained by them.⁴⁶
When they see me, they shake their heads.⁴⁷

(Psa 109:26) Help me, O LORD my God!
Because you are faithful to me, deliver me!⁴⁸

(Psa 109:27) Then they will realize⁴⁹ this is your work,⁵⁰
and that you, LORD, have accomplished it.

(Psa 109:28) They curse, but you will bless.⁵¹

When they attack, they will be humiliated,⁵² but your servant will rejoice.

(Psa 109:29) My accusers will be covered⁵³ with shame, and draped in humiliation as if it were a robe.

(Psa 109:30) I will thank the LORD profusely,⁵⁴ in the middle of a crowd⁵⁵ I will praise him,

(Psa 109:31) because he stands at the right hand of the needy, to deliver him from those who threaten⁵⁶ his life.

(Psa 110:1) Psalm 110¹

A psalm of David.

Here is the LORD's proclamation² to my lord:³

"Sit down at my right hand⁴ until I make your enemies your footstool!"⁵

(Psa 110:2) The LORD⁶ extends⁷ your dominion⁸ from Zion. Rule in the midst of your enemies!

(Psa 110:3) Your people willingly follow you⁹ when you go into battle.¹⁰

On the holy hills¹¹ at sunrise¹² the dew of your youth¹³ belongs to you.¹⁴

(Psa 110:4) The LORD makes this promise on oath¹⁵ and will not revoke it:¹⁶ "You are an eternal priest¹⁷ after the pattern of¹⁸ Melchizedek."¹⁹

(Psa 110:5) O sovereign LORD,²⁰ at your right hand he strikes down²¹ kings in the day he unleashes his anger.²²

(Psa 110:6) He executes judgment²³ against²⁴ the nations;
he fills the valleys with corpses;²⁵
he shatters their heads over the vast battlefield.²⁶

(Psa 110:7) From the stream along the road he drinks;
then he lifts up his head.²⁷

(Psa 111:1) Psalm 111

Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the
assembly of the godly and the congregation.

(Psa 111:2) The LORD's deeds are great,
eagerly awaited² by all who desire them.

(Psa 111:3) His work is majestic and glorious,³ and his
faithfulness endures⁴ forever.

(Psa 111:4) He does⁵ amazing things that will be
remembered;⁶ the LORD is merciful and compassionate.

(Psa 111:5) He gives⁷ food to his faithful followers;⁸ he
always remembers his covenant.⁹

(Psa 111:6) He announced that he would do mighty deeds
for his people, giving them a land that belonged to other
nations.¹⁰

(Psa 111:7) His acts are characterized by¹¹ faithfulness and
justice; all his precepts are reliable.¹²

(Psa 111:8) They are forever firm,
and should be faithfully and properly carried out.¹³

(Psa 111:9) He delivered his people;¹⁴
he ordained that his covenant be observed forever.¹⁵

His name is holy and awesome.

(Psa 111:10) To obey the LORD is the fundamental principle for wise living;¹⁶ all who carry out his precepts acquire good moral insight.¹⁷

He will receive praise forever.¹⁸

(Psa 112:1) Psalm 112¹

Praise the LORD!

How blessed is the one² who obeys³ the LORD, who takes great delight in keeping his commands.⁴

(Psa 112:2) His descendants⁵ will be powerful on the earth; the godly⁶ will be blessed.

(Psa 112:3) His house contains wealth and riches; his integrity endures.⁷

(Psa 112:4) In the darkness a light⁸ shines for the godly, for each one who is merciful, compassionate, and just.⁹

(Psa 112:5) It goes well for the one¹⁰ who generously lends money, and conducts his business honestly.¹¹

(Psa 112:6) For he will never be upended; others will always remember one who is just.¹²

(Psa 112:7) He does not fear bad news. He¹³ is confident; he trusts¹⁴ in the LORD.

(Psa 112:8) His resolve¹⁵ is firm; he will not succumb to fear before he looks in triumph on his enemies.

(Psa 112:9) He generously gives¹⁶ to the needy; his integrity endures.¹⁷
He will be vindicated and honored.¹⁸

(Psa 112:10) When the wicked¹⁹ see this, they will worry; they will grind their teeth in frustration²⁰ and melt away; the desire of the wicked will perish.²¹

(Psa 113:1) Psalm 113¹

Praise the LORD!

Praise, you servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD!

(Psa 113:2) May the LORD's name be praised now and forevermore!

(Psa 113:3) From east to west²
the LORD's name is deserving of praise.

(Psa 113:4) The LORD is exalted over all the nations;
his splendor reaches beyond the sky.³

(Psa 113:5) Who can compare to the LORD our God, who sits on a high throne?⁴

(Psa 113:6) He bends down to look⁵ at the sky and the earth.

(Psa 113:7) He raises the poor from the dirt,
and lifts up the needy from the garbage pile,⁶

(Psa 113:8) that he might seat him with princes, with the princes of his people.

(Psa 113:9) He makes the barren woman of the family⁷ a happy mother of children.⁸

Praise the LORD!

(Psa 114:1) Psalm 114¹

When Israel left Egypt,
when the family of Jacob left a foreign nation behind,²

(Psa 114:2) Judah became his sanctuary, Israel his kingdom.

(Psa 114:3) The sea looked and fled;³ the Jordan River⁴
turned back.⁵

(Psa 114:4) The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like
lambs.⁶

(Psa 114:5) Why do you flee, O sea?
Why do you turn back, O Jordan River?

(Psa 114:6) Why do you skip like rams, O mountains, like
lambs, O hills?

(Psa 114:7) Tremble, O earth, before the Lord —
before the God of Jacob,

(Psa 114:8) who turned a rock into a pool of water, a hard
rock into springs of water!⁷

(Psa 115:1) Psalm 115¹

Not to us, O LORD, not to us! But to your name bring honor,²
for the sake of your loyal love and faithfulness.³

(Psa 115:2) Why should the nations say, “Where is their
God?”

(Psa 115:3) Our God is in heaven!
He does whatever he pleases!⁴

(Psa 115:4) Their⁵ idols are made of silver and gold —
they are man-made.⁶

(Psa 115:5) They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see,

(Psa 115:6) ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell,

(Psa 115:7) hands, but cannot touch, feet, but cannot walk.

They cannot even clear their throats.⁷

(Psa 115:8) Those who make them will end up⁸ like them, as will everyone who trusts in them.

(Psa 115:9) O Israel, trust in the LORD!

He is their deliverer⁹ and protector.¹⁰

(Psa 115:10) O family¹¹ of Aaron, trust in the LORD!

He is their deliverer¹² and protector.¹³

(Psa 115:11) You loyal followers of the LORD,¹⁴ trust in the LORD!

He is their deliverer¹⁵ and protector.¹⁶

(Psa 115:12) The LORD takes notice of us,¹⁷ he will bless¹⁸ — he will bless the family¹⁹ of Israel, he will bless the family of Aaron.

(Psa 115:13) He will bless his loyal followers,²⁰ both young and old.²¹

(Psa 115:14) May he increase your numbers, yours and your children's!²²

(Psa 115:15) May you be blessed by the LORD, the creator²³ of heaven and earth!

(Psa 115:16) The heavens belong to the LORD,²⁴ but the earth he has given to mankind.²⁵

(Psa 115:17) The dead do not praise the LORD,

nor do any of those who descend into the silence of death.²⁶

(Psa 115:18) But we will praise the LORD
now and forevermore. Praise the LORD!

(Psa 116:1) Psalm 116

I love the LORD
because he heard my plea for mercy,²

(Psa 116:2) and listened to me.³
As long as I live, I will call to him when I need help.⁴

(Psa 116:3) The ropes of death tightened around me,⁵ the
snares⁶ of Sheol confronted me.
I was confronted⁷ with trouble and sorrow.

(Psa 116:4) I called on the name of the LORD, "Please LORD,
rescue my life!"

(Psa 116:5) The LORD is merciful and fair;
our God is compassionate.

(Psa 116:6) The LORD protects⁸ the untrained;⁹
I was in serious trouble¹⁰ and he delivered me.

(Psa 116:7) Rest once more, my soul,¹¹
for the LORD has vindicated you.¹²

(Psa 116:8) Yes,¹³ LORD,¹⁴ you rescued my life from death,
and kept my feet from stumbling.

(Psa 116:9) I will serve¹⁵ the LORD
in the land¹⁶ of the living.

(Psa 116:10) I had faith when I said, "I am severely
oppressed."

(Psa 116:11) I rashly declared,¹⁷ "All men are liars."

(Psa 116:12) How can I repay the LORD
for all his acts of kindness to me?

(Psa 116:13) I will celebrate my deliverance,¹⁸ and call on the name of the LORD.

(Psa 116:14) I will fulfill my vows to the LORD before all his people.

(Psa 116:15) The LORD values the lives of his faithful followers.¹⁹

(Psa 116:16) Yes, LORD! I am indeed your servant; I am your lowest slave.²⁰
You saved me from death.²¹

(Psa 116:17) I will present a thank offering to you, and call on the name of the LORD.

(Psa 116:18) I will fulfill my vows to the LORD before all his people,

(Psa 116:19) in the courts of the LORD's temple, in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

(Psa 117:1) Psalm 117¹

Praise the LORD, all you nations! Applaud him, all you foreigners!²

(Psa 117:2) For his loyal love towers³ over us, and the LORD's faithfulness endures. Praise the LORD!

(Psa 118:1) Psalm 118¹

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good and his loyal love endures!²

(Psa 118:2) Let Israel say,
"Yes, his loyal love endures!"

(Psa 118:3) Let the family³ of Aaron say, “Yes, his loyal love endures!”

(Psa 118:4) Let the loyal followers of the LORD⁴ say, “Yes, his loyal love endures!”

(Psa 118:5) In my distress⁵ I cried out to the LORD.
The LORD answered me and put me in a wide open place.⁶

(Psa 118:6) The LORD is on my side,⁷ I am not afraid!
What can people do to me?⁸

(Psa 118:7) The LORD is on my side⁹ as my helper.¹⁰
I look in triumph on those who hate me.

(Psa 118:8) It is better to take shelter¹¹ in the LORD
than to trust in people.

(Psa 118:9) It is better to take shelter in the LORD
than to trust in princes.

(Psa 118:10) All the nations surrounded me.¹²
Indeed, in the name of the LORD¹³ I pushed them away.¹⁴

(Psa 118:11) They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me.
Indeed, in the name of the LORD I pushed them away.

(Psa 118:12) They surrounded me like bees.
But they disappeared as quickly¹⁵ as a fire among thorns.¹⁶
Indeed, in the name of the LORD I pushed them away.

(Psa 118:13) “You aggressively attacked me¹⁷ and tried to knock me down,¹⁸ but the LORD helped me.

(Psa 118:14) The LORD gives me strength and protects me;¹⁹ he has become my deliverer."²⁰

(Psa 118:15) They celebrate deliverance in the tents of the godly.²¹

The LORD's right hand conquers,²²

(Psa 118:16) the LORD's right hand gives victory,²³ the LORD's right hand conquers.

(Psa 118:17) I will not die, but live,
and I will proclaim what the LORD has done.²⁴ (Psa 118:18)
The LORD severely²⁵ punished me,
but he did not hand me over to death.

(Psa 118:19) Open for me the gates of the just king's temple!²⁶

I will enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

(Psa 118:20) This is the LORD's gate —
the godly enter through it.

(Psa 118:21) I will give you thanks, for you answered me,
and have become my deliverer.

(Psa 118:22) The stone which the builders discarded²⁷ has
become the cornerstone.²⁸

(Psa 118:23) This is the LORD's work.
We consider it amazing!²⁹

(Psa 118:24) This is the day the LORD has brought about.³⁰
We will be happy and rejoice in it.

(Psa 118:25) Please LORD, deliver!
Please LORD, grant us success!³¹

(Psa 118:26) May the one who comes in the name of the LORD³² be blessed!

We will pronounce blessings on you³³ in the LORD's temple.³⁴

(Psa 118:27) The LORD is God and he has delivered us.³⁵
Tie the offering³⁶ with ropes to the horns of the altar!³⁷

(Psa 118:28) You are my³⁸ God and I will give you thanks!
You are my God and I will praise you!

(Psa 118:29) Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good and his loyal love endures!³⁹

(Psa 119:1) Psalm 119¹

א (Alef)

How blessed are those whose actions are blameless,² who obey³ the law of the LORD.

(Guzik)

Psa 119:1-176

Psalms 119 – The Greatness and Glory of God's Word

This long Psalm deserves a long introduction. The author is unnamed; older commentators almost universally say it is a Psalm of David, composed throughout his entire life. More modern commentators often say that it is post-exilic, coming from the days of Nehemiah or Ezra. We lean towards agreement with the older commentators, but do not insist upon it; if it were important, God would have preserved the name of David to this Psalm. No matter who wrote it, we notice that it was likely written over some period of time and later compiled, because there is not a definite flow of

thought from the beginning of the Psalm to the end. The sections and verses are not like a chain, where one link is connected to the other, but like a string of pearls where each pearl has equal, but independent value.

The Psalm is arranged in an acrostic pattern. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and this Psalm contains 22 units of 8 verses each. Each of the 22 sections is given to a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and each line in that section begins with that letter. The closest parallel to this pattern in Scripture is found in Lamentations 3, which is also divided into 22 sections, and there are a few other passages in the Hebrew Scriptures which use an acrostic pattern.

Since this is a Psalm glorifying God and His Word, it refers to Scripture over and over again. The psalm is remarkable for how often it refers to God's written revelation, His word. It is referred to in almost every verse. The Masorites said that the Word of God is mentioned in every verse except Psa_119:122. Other people reckon differently (with disagreement about verses 84, 90, 121, and 132). But Scripture is mentioned in at least 171 of 176 verses.

In this Psalm there are 8 basic words used to describe the Scriptures, God's written revelation to us:

- Law (torah, used 25 times in Psalms 119): "Its parent verb means 'teach' or 'direct'; therefore coming from God it means both 'law' and 'revelation.' It can be used of a single command or of a whole body of law." (Kidner)
- Word (dabar, used 24 times): The idea is of the spoken word, God's revealed word to man. "Proceeding from his mouth and revealed by him to us." (Poole)

- Judgments (mispatim, used 23 times): “From shaphat, to judge, determine, regulate, order, and discern, because they judge concerning our words and works; show the rules by which they should be regulated; and cause us to discern what is right and wrong, and decide accordingly.” (Clarke)
- Testimonies (edut/edot, used 23 times): This word is related to the word for witness. To obey His testimonies “signifies loyalty to the terms of the covenant made between the Lord and Israel.” (VanGemeren)
- Commandments (miswah/miswot, used 22 times): “This word emphasizes the straight authority of what is said ... the right to give orders.” (Kidner)
- Statutes (huqqim, used 21 times): The noun is derived from the root verb “engrave” or “inscribe”; the idea is of the written word of God and the authority of His written word. “Declaring his authority and power of giving us laws.” (Poole)
- Precepts (piqqudim, used 21 times): “This is a word drawn from the sphere of an officer or overseer, and man who is responsible to look closely into a situation and take action... . So the word points to the particular instructions of the Lord, as of one who cares about detail.” (Kidner)
- Word (imrah, used 19 times): Similar in meaning to dabar, yet a different term. “The ‘word’ may denote anything God has spoken, commanded, or promised.” (VanGemeren)

The theme of the glory of Scripture is diligently explored in this Psalm, but always in connection with God Himself.

Derek Kidner well remarks: “This untiring emphasis has led some to accuse the psalmist of worshipping the Word rather than the Lord; but it has been well remarked that every

reference here to Scripture, without exception, relates it explicitly to its Author; indeed, every verse from 4 to the end is a prayer for affirmation addressed to Him. This is true piety: a love of God not desiccated by study but refreshed, informed and nourished by it."

"This wonderful psalm, from its great length, helps us to wonder at the immensity of Scripture. From its keeping to one subject it helps us to adore the unity of Scripture; for it is but one. Yet, from the many turns it gives to the same thought, it helps you to see the variety of Scripture... . Some have said that in it there is an absence of variety, but that is merely the observation of those who have not studied it. I have weighed each word, and looked at each syllable with lengthened meditation; and I bear witness that this sacred song has no tautology in it, but is charmingly varied from beginning to end. Its variety is that of a kaleidoscope: from a few objects a boundless variation is produced. In the kaleidoscope you look once, and there is a strangely beautiful form. You shift the glass a very little, and another shape, equally delicate and beautiful, is before your eyes. So it is here." (Charles Spurgeon)

Being such a long Psalm – and the longest chapter in the Bible – this Psalm has been of some historical note. There have been many lengthy works written on this Psalm; one of them is by Thomas Manton, a Puritan preacher and writer, who wrote a three-volume work on Psalms 119. Each volume is between 500 and 600 pages, with a total of 1,677 pages. There are 190 chapters in his work, more than one chapter for each verse.

"Luther professed that he prized this Psalm so highly, that he would not take the whole world in exchange for one leaf of it." (Bridges) Some great people have memorized this whole Psalm and found great blessing in doing so. John

Ruskin (19th century British writer), William Wilberforce (19th century British politician who led the movement to abolish the slave trade in the British Empire), Henry Martyn (19th century pioneer missionary to India), and David Livingstone (19th century pioneer missionary to Africa).

George Wishart was the Bishop of Edinburgh in the 17th century (not to be confused with another Scot by the same name who was martyred a century earlier). Wishart was condemned to death and would have been executed. But when he was on the scaffold he made use of a custom that allowed the condemned person to choose one psalm to be sung, and he chose Psalms 119. Before two-thirds of the psalm was sung, his pardon arrived and his life was spared.

A. Alef α: The Blessedness of Those who Walk in God's Word and the Longing to Do So.

1. (Psa_119:1-2) Blessing declared. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the Lord!

Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!

a. Blessed are the undefiled in the way: In beginning to describe man's blessedness, the Psalmist starts with the idea that being undefiled in the way is a blessing.

i. Many people – ancient and modern – think the life lived undefiled in the way is boring at best. The idea is that if there isn't any defilement in it, it therefore can't be any fun. Yet the one who walks in God's word knows the true blessedness of living and enjoying an undefiled life.

ii. We can simply say that God is blessed; He wants us to share His blessedness. His word shows us the way to share His blessedness, and it is found by being undefiled in the way.

iii. Survey and polling data constantly demonstrate that those who live lives in general conformity to God's standards are happier, enjoy life more, and are more content. Yet the illusion remains for many that a defiled life is more "fun."

iv. We need God to show us the way to a happy life, and it is centered on being undefiled in the way. "The reason we are not happy is that we sin, and the main reason we sin as much as we do is that we do not know the Bible well enough... . Apart from being instructed by God, human beings do not know how to achieve happiness." (Boice)

b. Who walk in the law of the Lord! In the mind of the Psalmist, there is a strong and definite connection between being undefiled in the way and to walk in the law of the Lord. To walk in the law of the Lord is in fact to be undefiled in the way.

i. We wouldn't know what a pure life was without God telling us. Certainly, some aspects of a pure life are revealed in human conscience and known widely among humanity. Yet there are other aspects of the pure life that we learn only from the Word of God.

ii. The law of the Lord: Here the author of Psalms 119 uses, for the first time, a phrase referring to the written revelation of God. The many various ways he referred to God's written revelation shows us how much he knew, loved, and respected God's Word.

iii. The law of the Lord: The word here used is torah. "Here the great word Torah is used, the word which to the Hebrew stood for the Law, being the word employed to describe the

first division of the Bible, that which we call the Pentateuch.” (Morgan)

iv. “To enjoy this beatitude a holy walking must become habitual. This sacred exercise is very different from sluggish piety. ‘Blessed are the undefiled in the way who walk in the law of the Lord.’ A man may sit down in the road without soiling his skin or fouling his apparel, but that is not enough. There must be progress – practical action – in the Christian life; and in order to blessedness we must be doing something for the Master.” (Spurgeon)

c. Blessed are those who keep His testimonies: To keep His testimonies is virtually the same as to walk in the law of the Lord. Here is an example of the parallelism common to Hebrew poetry, used for both explanation and emphasis.

i. Keep means doing, not only hearing. “Neither is it enough that we understand or ponder God’s precepts, but we must practise them, if we would be happy.” (Trapp)

ii. “Blessedness is ascribed to those who treasure up the testimonies of the Lord: in which is implied that they search the Scriptures, that they come to an understanding of them, that they love them, and then that they continue in the practice of them. We must first get a thing before we can keep it. In order to keep it well we must get a firm grip of it: we cannot keep in the heart that which we have not heartily embraced by the affections.’ (Spurgeon)

iii. “But let me not shrink from the question, do I ‘keep his testimonies’ from constraint, or from love? Surely when I consider my own natural aversion and enmity to the law of God, and the danger of self-deception in the external service of the Lord, I have much need to pray.” (Bridges)

d. Who seek Him with the whole heart! If one will seek God with the whole heart, it must include diligent study into God's written revelation. There are good and important ways to seek God other than through His word (such as in prayer, worship, fasting, serving, and so forth). Yet if these do not include seeking God in and through His word, these other practices can be dangerous.

i. With the whole heart: Yet, we do not miss the emphasis on the heart. "God is not truly sought by the cold researches of the brain: we must seek him with the heart. Love reveals itself to love: God manifests his heart to the heart of his people. It is in vain that we endeavour to comprehend him by reason; we must apprehend him by affection." (Spurgeon)

ii. The whole heart is vital. God is one; and we will not know Him closely until our heart is one and we seek Him with the whole heart. This is a challenge to the divided heart, not to the broken heart. "Strange to say, in scriptural phraseology, a heart may be divided and not broken, and it may be broken but not divided; and yet again it may be broken and be whole, and it never can be whole until it is broken." (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_119:3) Blessing described. They also do no iniquity; They walk in His ways.

a. They also do no iniquity: The idea from Psa_119:1-2 is repeated; these ones keep His testimonies, they are undefiled in the way, and they also do no iniquity. There is a purity and goodness that marks their life.

b. They walk in His ways: They have learned His ways from the written revelation; but with His Word God also gives grace and power to walk in His ways.

3. (Psa_119:4-8) Blessing desired. You have commanded us
To keep Your precepts diligently.

Oh, that my ways were directed

To keep Your statutes!

Then I would not be ashamed,

When I look into all Your commandments. I will praise You
with uprightness of heart, When I learn Your righteous
judgments.

I will keep Your statutes;

Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

a. You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently:
In this the Psalmist connects commanded obedience with
the blessings to the obedient. He shows that the reason God
commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently is not only
because it honors Him, but also because it is the path to
blessing.

i. With the words “You have commanded us” we see that the
Psalmist begins to address God in prayer; a position he will
hold through most the entire Psalm. This shows that he was
not only a student of Scripture, but also a man of prayer.

ii. “Because it was a hard thing to rightly understand this
word in all its parts, and harder to put it in practice, he
therefore intermixed many prayers to God for his help
therein, thereby directing and encouraging others to take
the same course.” (Poole)

iii. To keep Your precepts: “God has not commanded us to be
diligent in making precepts, but in keeping them. Some bind

yokes upon their own necks, and make bonds and rules for others: but the wise course is to be satisfied with the rules of holy Scripture.” (Spurgeon)

b. Oh, that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes: This is not only a pious wish; it is also a prayer for the ability to obey God’s Word. We received God’s commands understanding our lack of ability to keep those commands, apart from His work in us.

i. Here we see the Psalmist get personal. This isn’t a theological treatise on written revelation; it is an interaction with the Living God regarding His primary way of showing Himself to us. “It may be considered as the journal of one, who was deeply taught in the things of God, long practiced in the life and walk of faith. It contains the anatomy of experimental religion, the interior lineaments of the family of God.” (Bridges)

ii. “We do not get very far into the psalm before we discover that he is very much like ourselves, at least in the respect that he has not yet gotten to be like the happy, blessed ones he is describing. He wants to be, but he is not yet.” (Boice)

iii. “Without thee I can do nothing; my soul is unstable and fickle; and it will continue weak and uncertain till thou strengthen and establish it.” (Clarke)

c. Then I would not be ashamed, when I look into all Your commandments: The Psalmist felt the shame that comes when the standard of God’s Word is compared to our life. He prayed for the power to live an unashamed life.

i. “‘Shame’ is the fruit of sin; confidence is the effect of righteousness.” (Horne)

ii. "There is a twofold shame; the shame of a guilty conscience; and the shame of a tender conscience. The one is the merit and fruit of sin; the other is an act of grace. This which is here spoken of is to be understood not of a holy self loathing, but a confounding shame." (Thomas Manton, cited in Spurgeon)

iii. "Unto all thy commandments; so as not to be partial in my obedience, not to allow myself in the practice of any known sin, or in the neglect of any known duty." (Poole)

iv. "Sincerity therefore must be the stamp of my Christian profession. Though utterly unable to render perfect obedience to the least of the commandments, yet my desire and purpose will have respect unto them all." (Bridges)

d. I will praise You with uprightness of heart: The Psalmist found it not only important to praise God, but to do it with uprightness of heart. He did not want to offer God the image of praise or a moment of praise when the rest of his life was not upright.

i. "Be sure that he who prays for holiness will one day praise for happiness. Shame having vanished, silence is broken, and the formerly silent man declares, 'I will praise thee.'" (Spurgeon)

e. I will keep Your statutes: This was a promise to keep – in the sense of guarding – the statutes (huqqim), the engraved, inscribed, written word of God.

i. We never forget that in a real sense, only Jesus could say, "I will keep Your statutes." "The many strong expressions of love toward the law, and the repeated resolutions and vows to observe it, will often force us to turn our thoughts to the

true David, whose ‘meat and drink it was, to do the will of him that sent him.’” (Horne)

f. Oh, do not forsake me utterly! We sense the note of desperation in the Psalmist. He knows and loves God’s word, yet is also very conscious of his inability – apart from the work of God in his life – to live God’s Word. If God did forsake him, he would be lost.

i. “Forsaken we may be – but not utterly. David was forsaken, not like Saul. Peter was forsaken, not like Judas, utterly and for ever... . Mark his dealings with you. Inquire into their reason. Submit to his dispensation. If he forsakes, beg his return: but trust your forsaking God.” (Bridges)

ii. The heart that sings, “do not forsake me utterly!” is a heart that longs to be close to God. “Apparently unconsciously, that is without intention, the song reveals the fact that a man who obeys the will of God as revealed, comes to a personal fellowship with God. From beginning to end, the singer sang as one who had personal knowledge of God and direct dealing with Him.” (Morgan)

B. Bet ב: Purity of Life and Meditation on God’s Word.

Each line of this second section of Psalms 119 begins with the Hebrew letter beth, which also means “a house.” Some have suggested that this section tells us how to make our heart a home for the Word of God.

1. (Psa_119:9) A young man finds a cleansed life through God’s word. How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.

a. How can a young man cleanse his way? This was no less a difficult question in ancient times than in our own. The

young man has his own particular challenges in living a pure life.

i. This is a question that some – even some who are numbered among the people of God – never seem to ask for themselves. Sadly, some people never have a life concern for moral purity. They echo the prayer of Augustine before his conversion: “Lord, make me chaste – but not yet.”

ii. The world tells us, “Have your good time when you are young; get it all out of your system. When you are older you can settle down and be religious and proper.” Boice comments on this thinking: “God’s answer is quite different. God says, If you are going to live for me, you must begin at the earliest possible moment, without delay, preferably when you are very young.”

iii. Even when one has the desire for moral purity, there are many things that may make it difficult for a young man to cleanse his way.

- · Youthful energy and sense of carelessness.
- · The lack of life wisdom.
- · The desire for and gaining of independence.
- · Physical and sexual maturity that may run ahead of spiritual and moral maturity.
- · Money and the freedom that it brings.
- · Young women who may – knowingly or unknowingly – encourage moral impurity.

- · The spirit of the age that both expects and promotes moral uncleanness for young men.

- · The desire to be accepted by peers who face the same challenges.

iv. “Why is the young man so especially called to cleanse his way? Because God justly claims the first and the best.” (Bridges)

v. It is also because God wants to spare the young man (and the older man) the bondage of sin. This reflects upon the power of experience to shape our habits. Surrender to any temptation; transfer it from the realm of mental contemplation to life experience, and that temptation instantly becomes much more difficult to resist in the future. Each successive experience of surrender to temptation builds a habit, reinforced not only spiritually, but also by brain chemistry. Such ingrained habits are more and more difficult to break the more they are experienced; and it is almost impossible to break such habits without replacing them with another habit.

vi. Significantly, the words “his way” come from the Hebrew “orach, which we translate way here, signifies a track, a rut, such as is made by the wheel of a cart or chariot.” (Clarke) Youth sets the tracks for the rest of the life.

vii. Of course, it is not only the young man who has these challenges; older men and women of every age have their own challenges to pure living. Yet these are often more severely felt in the life of the young man.

viii. “From the heartfelt prayers of the surrounding verses it would seem that the young man is the psalmist himself in

the first place. He is praying rather than preaching.” (Kidner)

b. By taking heed: A life of moral purity does not happen accidentally. If one does not take heed, the natural path is towards impurity and degeneration. One must take heed in order to be pure.

c. According to Your word: This is how one takes heed. The foundation for a morally pure life is found in God’s word.

- · God’s word shows us the standard of purity, so we know what is right and what is wrong.

- · God’s word shows us the reasons for purity, so we understand the wisdom and goodness of God’s commands.

- · God’s word shows us the difficulty of purity, and reminds us to be on guard.

- · God’s word shows us the blessings of purity, and gives us an incentive to make the necessary sacrifices.

- · God’s word shows us how to be born again – converted, so our inner man may be transformed after the pattern of ultimate purity, Jesus Christ.

- · God’s word shows us the way to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, so that one has the spiritual resources to be pure.

- · God’s word is a refuge against temptation, giving a way of escape in the season of enticement.

· · God's word is a light that clears away the deceptive fog of seduction and temptation.

· · God's word is a mirror that helps one to see their spiritual and moral condition, and thus walk in purity.

· · God's word gives us wise and simple commands, such as to "Flee youthful lusts" (2Ti_2:22).

· · God's word washes us from impurity, and actually cleanses our life in a spiritual sense (Eph_5:26, Joh_15:3).

· · God's word is the key to the renewing of our mind, which in turn is the key to personal, moral, and spiritual transformation (Rom_12:1-2).

· · God's word gives a refuge against condemnation when one has been impure, and shows one how to repent when they have been impure, and how to come back to a pure life.

· · God's word shows us how to conduct our life so that we are an encouragement to others in purity.

i. Jesus spoke specifically of the power of His word to cleanse and keep pure: You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you (Joh_5:3). Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth (Joh_17:17).

ii. The impact is clear: if one is concerned to cleanse his way, then he must also be concerned to take heed according to God's word.

iii. "Young man, the Bible must be your chart, and you must exercise great watchfulness that your way may be according to its directions. You must take heed to your daily life as well

as study your Bible, and you must study your Bible that you may take heed to your daily life. With the greatest care a man will go astray if his map misleads him; but with the most accurate map he will still lose his road if he does not take heed to it." (Spurgeon)

iv. This idea is communicated in Pro_2:10-12 : When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things.

v. "He who became man for our salvation, passed through this state of youth, undefiled, that he might, as it were, reclaim and consecrate it anew to God." (Horne) We remind ourselves that Jesus answered temptation with the Word of God (Mat_4:1-10).

2. (Psa_119:10-11) How one takes heed to God's word. With my whole heart I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.

a. With my whole heart I have sought You: Here the Psalmist both declares his dedication to God, while at the same time recognizing his weakness to maintain such a dedication (Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!).

i. With my whole heart I have sought You reminds us that Scripture was no mere textbook to the Psalmist; it was how he sought and met with God. "His heart had gone after God himself: he had not only desired to obey his laws, but to commune with his person." (Spurgeon)

ii. Let me not wander helps us to put in perspective the many claims to purity and devotion in this Psalm (and others). They are understood in the light of dependence upon God, not in the sense of self-righteous pride.

iii. "The path of purity is that of caution conditioned by the Word of God. This caution is further manifested in the distrust of self, and earnest seeking to be kept in the way of God's commandments." (Morgan)

iv. "When the soul is thus conscious of 'following the Lord fully,' there is a peculiar dread of wandering. In a careless or halfhearted state, wanderings are not watched, so long as they do not lead to any open declension." (Bridges)

b. Your word I have hidden in my heart: The Psalmist knew the value of taking God's word and hiding it in the heart. It is hidden in the sense that it is on the inside, where none can see it and it is safe so that none can take it away.

i. We can be assured that before this word was hidden in the heart, it was received in the mind. The Psalmist heard and read the Word of God, and thought about it continually, until it became ingrained in both mind and heart.

ii. "Memorizing is precisely what is called for, since it is only when the Word of God is readily available in our minds that we are able to recall it in moments of need and profit by it." (Boice)

iii. "If God's word be only in his Bible, and not also in his heart, he may soon and easily be surprised into his besetting sin." (Clarke)

c. That I might not sin against You: Here the Psalmist states one benefit from having God's word hidden in the heart. It is a defense against sin, for all the reasons discussed above and more.

i. "The personal way in which the man of God did this is also noteworthy: 'With my whole heart have I sought thee.' Whatever others might choose to do he had already made his choice and placed the Word in his innermost soul as his dearest delight, and however others might transgress, his aim was after holiness: 'That I might not sin against thee.'" (Spurgeon)

3. (Psa_119:12) A prayer for instruction. Blessed are You, O Lord!

Teach me Your statutes.

a. Blessed are You, O Lord! The Psalmist seems to interrupt his thoughts on the connection between God's word and a pure life with this expression of praise. The greatness of these ideas and the reality of them in his life has made such praise necessary.

b. Teach me Your statutes: This is another reflection of the humility of the Psalmist. Though filled with God's word and a desire for purity, he sensed his constant need for instruction by God. He didn't simply need to read God's statutes; he pleaded with God to teach him.

i. It is saying written in many Bibles: "This book will keep you from sin. Sin will keep you from this book." The Psalmist understood this principle, and longed for God to be his teacher, and to keep him in God's great book.

ii. "We need to be disciples or learners— 'teach me;' but what an honour to have God himself for a teacher: how bold

is David to beg the blessed God to teach him!” (Spurgeon)

4. (Psa_119:13-16) A declaration of commitment. With my lips I have declared
All the judgments of Your mouth.

I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches.

I will meditate on Your precepts,
And contemplate Your ways.

I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

a. With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth: The Psalmist understood the importance of not only silently reading or hearing the Word of God, but also in saying it. To declare God’s word (all the judgments of Your mouth) with his lips was another part of his relationship with and love for God.

i. We may confidently conclude that there is not enough – never enough – of this among the people of God. God’s people should have His word not only in their minds and hearts, but also upon their lips. Saying it is powerful and must not be neglected.

ii. “When we make the Scriptures the subject of our conversation, we glorify God, we edify our neighbours, and we improve ourselves.” (Horne)

b. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches: The Psalmist understood the true value of God’s word; it gave him as much joy as all riches might.

i. It could be fairly asked to every Christian: “For what amount would you deny yourself to ever hear or read God’s

word again?" It is to be feared that many, like Esau would sell this birthright treasure for the equivalent of a bowl of stew.

ii. "We may also observe here an evidence of adoption. Obedience is not a burden, but a delight. The servant may perform the statutes of God, but it is only the son who 'delights in them.'" (Bridges)

c. I will meditate ... and contemplate ... I will delight ... I will not forget Your word: The greatness of God's word has led the Psalmist to great resolution of life. His life will be filled with God's word, in his mind (meditate ... contemplate), in his heart (delight), and in his habits (not forget).

i. "Meditation is recalling what we have committed to memory and then turning it over and over in our minds to see the fullest implications and applications of the truth." (Boice)

ii. I will delight: "The word is very emphatical: *evetva eshtaasha*, I will skip about and jump for joy." (Clarke)

iii. This giving of the fullness of life to God's word – in mind, heart, and habits – is a good description of what the Psalmist meant by taking heed in Psa_119:9. This will see the young man cleanse his way, and enjoy the fullness of such a God-honoring life.

iv. We can almost hear a challenge from the Psalmist: "You live your compromising, impure life that thinks it knows pleasure and satisfaction; I will cleanse my way and give the fullness of my life to God and His word, and we will see who will be more blessed, more happy, and more filled with life."

C. Gimel ג: The Word of God and the Trials of Life.

1. (Psa_119:17) A prayer for blessing, so that God's word can be kept. Deal bountifully with Your servant,
That I may live and keep Your word.

a. Deal bountifully with Your servant: This is a wonderful request; boldly asking for blessing (deal bountifully), while at the same time coming humbly before God (Your servant). The servant properly depends upon the master for his bounty.

i. In saying, "Deal bountifully," the Psalmist was asking for a lot, not just a little. "The believer, like David, is a man of large expectations... . We may, indeed, be too bold in our manner of approach to God; but we cannot be too bold in our expectations from him." (Bridges)

ii. "He begs for a liberality of grace, after the fashion of one who prayed, 'O Lord, thou must give me great mercy or no mercy, for little mercy will not serve my turn.'" (Spurgeon)

b. That I may live and keep Your word: This is why the Psalmist asked for God's blessing. It was not for personal indulgence or even comfort, but so that God's word might be lived and kept. This is a wonderful, God honoring prayer that is heard in heaven.

i. As the rest of this section will demonstrate, the Psalmist prayed this because of great problems and pressures that had beset him. This section of the Psalm shows us that the author was a man who had suffered deeply. He had known persecution (Psa_119:22-23), he had known deprivation and fear for his life (Psa_119:17), seasons when he seemed to get nothing from God's word (Psa_119:18), he had also known loneliness, rejection, and a sense of abandonment (Psa_119:19-20).

ii. In the midst of these trials, he wanted to live – not only in the sense of surviving, but also in the sense of a quality of life, especially in regard to God.

iii. That I may live: “[This] is the first of many such prayers ... While some of them could refer simply to surviving an illness or an attack, others are clearly qualitative, speaking of life that is worthy of the name, or in our terms, spiritual life, found in fellowship with God.” (Kidner)

2. (Psa_119:18) A prayer for insight, so that God’s word can be understood. Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.

a. Open my eyes, that I may see: The Psalmist recognized that without God’s enlightenment, he could not see what he could and should from God’s word.

i. “The verb ‘open’ in verse 18 is used in the Balaam story where the Lord opened Balaam’s eyes so he could see the angel of the Lord standing in the road with his sword drawn. It has to do with removing a veil, or covering.” (Boice)

ii. This reminds us that it isn’t the word that needs changing, as if it were obscure; we are the ones who are veiled and can’t understand the word of God apart from the work of the Spirit. Paul’s eyes were unveiled when he was converted (Act_9:18); it was as if scales had dropped from his eyes.

iii. “In order to keep God’s word, must we not pray to understand it? What then is this prayer? Not – give me a plainer Bible – but open my eyes to know my Bible. Not – show me some new revelations beside the law – but make me behold the wonders of the law.” (Bridges)

iv. The Psalmist didn't need new revelation; he needed to see the revelation that was already given. He didn't need new eyes; he needed to see with the eyes he already had.

b. Wondrous things from Your law: There are wondrous things in Scripture; but they can only be seen when the eyes are opened by God. This means that prayer is an important (and often neglected) part of Bible study.

i. It also means that not everyone sees the wondrous things in God's word, but that when one does see them, they should regard it as evidence of God's blessing and favor.

ii. Jesus rejoiced that God revealed His wisdom this way: At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes." (Mat_11:25)

iii. God has given man a sense of wonder, and there are certain things that prompt it. The new and unexpected can cause wonder; the beautiful and great can cause wonder, and the mysterious and unknown can cause wonder. We can say that God has provided for this sense of wonder by giving us His word. The Holy Spirit can make us alive to the Bible, and constantly see things that are new and unexpected; things that are great and beautiful; things that are mysterious and unknown. It is a shame to many Christians that they look for their sense of wonder to be satisfied without looking to the Word of God.

iv. Think of all there is in the Bible that you don't see. Think of all the wonder, all the treasure that is there, but you don't see it. You can see such things, though you can't see

everything, and sometimes you will think you see things that are not really there. Yet those who see more than you are not necessarily smarter or better; their eyes are just more open.

v. "If we want to see wonderful things in the Scriptures, it is not enough for us merely to ask God to open our eyes that we might see them. We must also study the Bible carefully. The Holy Spirit is given not to make our study unnecessary but to make it effective." (Boice)

3. (Psa_119:19-20) A prayer for revelation, longing for God's word. I am a stranger in the earth;
Do not hide Your commandments from me. My soul breaks with longing
For Your judgments at all times.

a. I am a stranger in the earth; do not hide Your commandments from me: This is the same request as in the previous verse, made upon a different reason. The Psalmist wants to know and keep God's word, and prays for it to be so; but now because he recognizes that earth is not his home, and he needs communication with his true homeland.

i. When we think of the man who says, "I am a stranger in the earth," we should not think of the man who wanders alone through the wilderness. We should think of the man who lives among others and is surrounded by the vanity of the world's joys, and all the while knows "I don't really belong here."

ii. "If you are trying to follow God, the world is going to treat you as an alien, for that is what you will be. You cannot expect to be at home in it, and if you are, well, it is an indication that you really do not belong to Christ or at least are living far from him." (Boice)

b. My soul breaks with longing for Your judgments at all times: His soul longed for God's word so much because he was indeed a stranger in the earth; for those who feel perfectly at home in this world, the word that comes to them from heaven is less precious.

i. My soul breaks: "We have a similar expression: It broke my heart, That is heart-breaking, She died of a broken heart. It expresses excessive longing, grievous disappointment, hopeless love, accumulated sorrow. By this we may see the hungering and thirsting which the psalmist had after righteousness, often mingled with much despondency." (Clarke)

ii. "Spiritual desires are the shadows of coming blessings. What God intends to give us he first sets us longing for. Hence the wonderful efficacy of prayer, because prayer is the embodiment of a longing inspired of God because he intends to bestow the blessing. What are thy longings, then, my hearer?" (Spurgeon)

iii. "Longing lingers not within a lifeless corpse. Where the heart is breaking with desire there is life. This may comfort some of you: you have not attained as yet to the holiness you admire, but you long for it: ah, then, you are a living soul, the life of God is in you." (Spurgeon)

4. (Psa_119:21-24) A prayer for refuge in God's word. You rebuke the proud—the cursed,
Who stray from Your commandments. Remove from me reproach and contempt, For I have kept Your testimonies.
Princes also sit and speak against me,
But Your servant meditates on Your statutes. Your testimonies also are my delight
And my counselors.

a. You rebuke the proud: Those who stray from God's commandments are both proud (their disobedience is evidence of willfulness) and cursed (no good can come from their disobedience).

i. "Let the histories of Cain, Pharaoh, Haman, Nebuchadnezzar, and Herod, exhibit the proud under the rebuke and curse of God." (Bridges)

b. Remove me from reproach and contempt: The Psalmist recognized that even princes also sit and speak against him; yet he would not turn from meditation on God's word. Instead, he simply prayed, asking God to deal with the reproach and contempt that notable people put on him for his love of God's word.

i. Reproach is unpleasant; it is the expression of disapproval or disappointment. Yet contempt is even worse; it is the feeling that a person or thing is beneath consideration, that they are worthless and useless.

ii. Beyond reproach and contempt, these enemies also did slander the Psalmist (sit and speak against me). Slander goes beyond our "stranger" status. When the world thinks we are strange and wonders if we belong, it sees us correctly. When the slander us, they tell lies about us and falsely accuse us.

iii. "The best way to deal with slander is to pray about it: God will either remove it, or remove the sting from it. Our own attempts at clearing ourselves are usually failures." (Spurgeon)

c. Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors: The Psalmist delighted and trusted in God's word much

more than in the high people of this earth (such as princes).

i. “Most men covet a prince’s good word, and to be spoken ill of by a great man is a great discouragement to them, but the Psalmist bore his trial with holy calmness... . While his enemies took counsel with each other the holy man took counsel with the testimonies of God.” (Spurgeon)

ii. My counselors: “Yet a mere cursory reading will never realize to us its holy delight or counsel. It must be brought home to our own experiences, and consulted on those trivial occasions of every day, when, unconscious of our need of Divine direction, we are too often inclined to lean to our own counsel.” (Bridges)

iii. In this section the Psalmist saw many things that hinder his reception of the Word of God and his fellowship with God, and he prayed to be preserved from them.

- · He saw the danger of a dead soul and a cold heart; therefore he prayed, “Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your word.”

- · He saw the danger of darkened understanding; therefore he prayed, “Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.”

- · He saw the danger of living as a stranger in a strange land; therefore he prayed, “Do not hide Your commandments from me.”

- · He saw his own weakness and instability; therefore he prayed, “My soul breaks with longing.”

- · He saw the danger of pride, evident in those who attacked him; therefore he recognized that the proud are “the cursed,

who stray for Your commandments.”

· · He saw the reproach and contempt that come upon him, and how they may shake his standing; therefore he prayed, “Remove from me reproach and contempt.”

· · He saw rulers plotting against him; therefore he prayed, “Your testimonies are my delight.”

iv. “He rises superior to these sorrowful circumstances by keeping the testimonies, meditating on the statutes, and so finding delight therein.” (Morgan)

D. Dalet ט: Revived from the Dust.

1. (Psa_119:25) A prayer for revival from a soul that feels dead. My soul clings to the dust;
Revive me according to Your word.

a. My soul clings to the dust: The Psalmist used a strong image to say that he felt near death in his current crisis; dust was the place of death, the place of mourning, and the place of humiliation.

i. “Whatever was the cause of his complaint, it was no surface evil, but an affair of his inmost spirit; his soul cleaved to the dust; and it was not a casual and accidental falling into the dust, but a continuous and powerful tendency, or cleaving to the earth.” (Spurgeon)

b. Revive me according to Your word: From this low place, the prayer for revival came. The Psalmist asked for life and vitality to be restored and he asked that it happen according to Your word.

i. This shows us that revival comes from a sense of spiritual need and lowliness. True revival – in the Biblical and

historical sense – is marked by a shamed awareness of sin and an urgency to confess and make things right (mentioned in the following verse).

ii. The Psalmist knew what he needed. “One would have thought that he would have asked for comfort or upraising, but he knew that these would come out of increased life, and therefore he sought that blessing which is the root of the rest. When a person is depressed in spirit, weak, and bent towards the ground, the main thing is to increase his stamina and put more life into him; then his spirit revives.” (Spurgeon)

iii. According to Your word shows us that God uses His word in bringing revival, and that works that claim to be revival can be measured according to His word.

2. (Psa_119:26-27) Teach me, make me understand. I have declared my ways, and You answered me; Teach me Your statutes.

Make me understand the way of Your precepts;

So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works.

a. I have declared my ways ... teach me Your statutes: The idea behind I have declared my ways is that he told God everything about himself and his life. He confessed fully and freely before God.

i. My ways: “My sins, in way of confession; and all my cares, and fears, and troubles, and concerns, in way of humble petition to thee, as appears from God’s answer.” (Poole)

ii. “Can each one of us now say, in this sense, ‘I have declared my ways’ to the Lord? For this should be done, not only at our first coming to him, but continually throughout

the whole of our life. We should look over each day, and sum up the errors of the day, and say, 'I have declared my ways,' — my naughty ways, my wicked ways, my wandering ways, my backsliding ways, my cold, indifferent ways, my proud ways.'" (Spurgeon)

iii. We have the sense of a wonderful liberty in conversation; he spoke to God as a dear friend. "How often do we treat our Almighty Friend as if we were weary of dealing with him!" (Bridges)

b. Make me understand the way of Your precepts: The Psalmist understood that he needed more than knowledge; he also needed understanding. With both he would meditate on God's wonderful works.

i. Make me understand: "It is concerned with a deep understanding, one that goes beyond a mere understanding of the words to a profound understanding of what they reveal about the nature of God, the gospel, and God's ways." (Boice)

ii. "'Teach me thy statutes.' I think the psalmist means this, 'My Lord, I have told thee all; now, wilt thou tell me all? I have declared to thee my ways; now, wilt thou teach me thy ways? I have confessed to thee how I have broken thy statutes; wilt thou not give me thy statutes back again?'" (Spurgeon)

3. (Psa_119:28) A plea for strength from a shrinking soul. My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word.

a. My soul melts from heaviness: The problems surrounding the Psalmist (as seen in Psa_119:17-24)

made his soul heavy, feeling as if it would melt. He felt that he had no strength or stability within.

b. Strengthen me according to Your word: Therefore, he prayed for strength, and that this strength would come both from and according to God's word.

i. "The singer is bowed down, overwhelmed. He sorely needs succour and strength. How does he seek it? Not by asking for pity, but by a determined application to the law of his God." (Morgan)

ii. "This melting heaviness has not wrought its work, until it has bowed us before the throne of grace with the pleading cry of faith – Strengthen thou me!" (Bridges)

4. (Psa_119:29-30) Choosing the way of truth. Remove from me the way of lying,
And grant me Your law graciously. I have chosen the way of truth;
Your judgments I have laid before me.

a. Remove from me the way of lying ... I have chosen the way of truth: The Psalmist sensed the common temptation to lie; yet he determined to choose the way of truth.

i. Remove me from the way of lying: "A sin that David, through diffidence, fell into frequently. See 1Sa_21:2; 1Sa_21:8, where he roundly telleth three or four lies; and the like he did, 1Sa_27:8; 1Sa_27:10 : this evil he saw by himself, and here prayeth against it." (Trapp)

ii. Grant me Your law graciously: The verb translated graciously "actually has the sense of

‘graciously teach,’ a single word. The full thought is, If we are to be kept from sin, it must be by the grace of God exercised through the teaching of his Word.” (Boice)

b. Your judgments I have laid before me: This is how the Psalmist was able to choose the way of truth. It was because he was in close relationship with the Word of God.

i. “Men do not drop into the right way by chance; they must choose it, and continue to choose it, or they will soon wander from it.” (Spurgeon)

5. (Psa_119:31-32) Rescue me; enlarge my heart. I cling to Your testimonies;
O Lord, do not put me to shame!

I will run the course of Your commandments, For You shall enlarge my heart.

a. I cling to Your testimonies; O Lord, do not put me to shame! The Psalmist understood that if he were to give himself entirely to God; to cling to His word as a shipwrecked man clings to a floating plank in the sea, then he could trust that God would not allow him to be put ... to shame. This was well-placed confidence.

i. In the beginning of the section he is clinging to the dust (Psa_119:25); by the end he is clinging to God’s word. In the beginning he is laid low; now he is joyfully running with all his strength in the race God’s word sets before him.

ii. The clinging of this verse connects well with the choosing of the previous verses. “Having once chosen our road, it remains that we persevere in it; since better had it been for us never to have known the way of truth, than to forsake it, when known.” (Horne)

b. I will run the course of Your commandments: After beginning low in the dust, now the Psalmist is running. He has moved in a beautiful progression, from confessing to choosing to clinging to running.

c. For You shall enlarge my heart: The Psalmist comes back to a familiar theme; not only of the greatness of God's word, but also of his acute sense of weakness and dependence upon God. He must have his heart enlarged; that is, made bigger and stronger and better and more steadfast. His confidence is that God will do this through His word.

i. "The remedy therefore is in that enlargement, which embraces a wider expanse of light, and a more full confidence of love... . He does not say - I will make no efforts, unless thou work for me; but if thou wilt enlarge - I will run. Weakness is not the plea for indolence, but for quickening grace... . The secret of Christian energy and success is a heart enlarged in the love of God." (Bridges)

E. He ה: A Plea for Guidance and Life.

He is the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and it is used at the beginning of verbs to make them causative. So the prayers in this section are stated, "Cause me to learn" and "Cause me to understand" and "Cause me to walk" and so forth.

1. (Psa_119:33-35) A prayer for instruction for righteous living. Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end.

Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me walk in the

path of Your commandments, For I delight in it.

a. Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end: The Psalmist here stresses his great desire to keep the way and word of God. The idea is that if only God teaches him, he will then persevere and keep it to the end.

i. "The general desire expressed in this division is that for guidance. It is not an appeal for direction in some special case of difficulty, but rather for the clear manifestation of the meaning of the will of God." (Morgan)

ii. Only a God-changed heart can pray this. Left to himself, man is unable to keep the way and word of God (much less keep it to the end). Php_2:13 tells us that it is God's work in us both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Here the Psalmist prays as one who has received the will, and now prays for the doing of it.

iii. We should reckon ourselves to the duty of following God and His word to the end. "The end of our keeping the law will come only when we cease to breathe; no good man will think of marking a date and saying, 'It is enough, I may now relax my watch, and live after the manner of men.'" (Spurgeon)

b. Give me understanding ... I shall observe it with my whole heart: Without this understanding, the Psalmist could not follow the desire of his transformed heart.

i. "The understanding operates upon the affections; it convinces the heart of the beauty of the law, so that the soul loves it with all its powers; and then it reveals the majesty of the lawgiver, and the whole nature bows before his supreme will." (Spurgeon)

ii. "That I may persevere; for apostasy proceeds from the want of a good understanding." (Poole)

iii. The Psalmist had no doubt that God has given His word to us; his only fear was that he would not understand it (or be distracted from it). Yet he was utterly confident that God had spoken and that it could be understood rightly by the prayerful heart and mind.

iv. " 'To the end' means without time limit, and 'with all my heart' means without reservation." (Boice)

c. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it: Despite his delight and desire for God's word, the Psalmist knows he cannot walk in God's path without God's empowering.

i. "We need no instruction in the way of sin... . But for a child of God, this is a prayer for constant use." (Bridges)

ii. "This is the cry of a child that longs to walk, but is too feeble; of a pilgrim who is exhausted, yet pants to be on the march; of a lame man who pines to be able to run." (Spurgeon)

2. (Psa_119:36-37) God's word and the problem of material things. Incline my heart to Your testimonies,
And not to covetousness.

Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things,

And revive me in Your way.

a. Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness: The Psalmist rightly understood that covetousness was a threat to walking in God's way. A heart

inclined towards God's word would help him be satisfied in what God provides.

i. "He is asking God to turn his heart toward the Bible rather than allowing him to pursue selfish gain. For the first time he is confessing a potentially divided mind." (Boice)

ii. The Bible tells us how covetousness has ruined many people.

- · Balaam sold out God's people and his own soul for covetousness (Numbers 22, 2Pe_2:14-16)

- · Ahab murdered for covetousness (1Ki_21:1-13)

- · David committed adultery and murder because he coveted (2Sa_6:2-17)

- · Achan stole and brought Israel to defeat by covetousness (Jos_7:21)

- · Judas stole from his fellow disciples and betrayed Jesus for covetousness (Joh_12:6 and Mat_26:14-16)

- · Gehazi lied for the sake of covetousness (2Ki_5:20-26)

- · Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit out of covetousness (Act_5:1-8)

iii. "It is a handmaid of all sins; for there is no sin which a covetous man will not serve for his gain. We should beware of all sins, but specially of mother-sins." (William Cowper, cited in Spurgeon)

b. Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things: The Psalmist rightly understood that some things, comparatively speaking, are worthless things. They are of no value for eternity and little value for the present age. He prayed that God would empower and enable him to turn away his eyes and attention from such things.

i. Many lives are wasted because people find themselves unwilling or unable to turn away their eyes from worthless things. The modern world with its media and entertainment technology brings before us an endless river of worthless things to occupy not only our eyes and time, but also our heart and minds.

ii. Some things are clearly worthless; some things are thought by many to be worthy, but are in fact worthless.

- · Worthless because they do no good.
- · Worthless because they do not last.
- · Worthless because they help no one else.
- · Worthless because they build no faith, hope, or love.
- · Worthless because they distract from things that are truly worthy.
- · Worthless because they have nothing to do with Jesus.

iii. The Psalmist understood that he had a natural tendency towards worthless things, so he prayed for that natural tendency to be counter-acted. "Keeping the eye is a grand means of 'keeping the heart' (Num_15:39, Job_31:1)." (Bridges)

iv. Yet the eyes are so powerful that the Psalmist had to pray; pray for power outside himself to turn his eyes from worthless things. Does the Psalmist have no eyelids? No muscles in his neck to turn the head? Yet we all sympathize with this prayer; the eyes are so small – yet they can lead the whole person, and often lead to destruction. This is because the eyes lead the heart, lead the mind, and can lead the whole person. He prayed this, “Lest looking cause liking and lusting.” (Trapp)

v. He did not gouge out his own eyes or pray God to do it; instead he wanted to look another way, a better way. The best way to look away from sin is to look at something else. “The prayer is not so much that the eyes may be shut as ‘turned away;’ for we need to have them open, but directed to right objects.” (Spurgeon)

c. And revive me in Your way: This is another prayer for revival; this time, to be made alive again in the way (or path) of God. The Psalmist wanted to walk in God’s way, and to do it with a revived heart. He prayed for deadness in one direction – towards worthless things, and for life in another direction – towards God’s way.

i. “As I desire that I may be dull and dead in affections to worldly vanities; so, Lord, make me lively, and vigorous, and fervent in thy work and service.” (Poole)

ii. “He goes at once to him in whom were all his fresh springs. Life is the peculiar sphere of God: he is the Lord and Giver of life. No man ever received spiritual life, or the renewal of it, from any other source but the living God. Beloved, this is worth recollecting, for we are very apt when we feel ourselves declining to look anywhere but to the Lord.

We, too, often look within. ‘Why seekest thou the living among the dead?’” (Spurgeon)

iii. God has many ways to revive us. Spurgeon listed some:

- · God’s Word: “There are promises in God’s word of such effectual restorative power, that, if they be but fed upon ... they will make a dwarf into a giant in the twinkling of an eye.”

- · Affliction: “It is wonderful how a little touch of the spur will quicken our sluggish natures.”

- · Great mercies: “A man may be stirred up to diligence by a sense of gratitude to God for great mercies.”

- · Christian example: “I believe the reading of holy biographies has been exceedingly blessed of God.”

- · Warm-hearted ministry: “We should select not that which tickles the ear most, but that which most enlivens the heart.”

3. (Psa_119:38-40) Longing for revival from God’s word.
Establish Your word to Your servant,
Who is devoted to fearing You.

Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your judgments
are good.

Behold, I long for Your precepts;

Revive me in Your righteousness.

a. Establish Your word to Your servant: This is not a prayer for God to change His word in some way; indeed, the word of the Lord is established forever (Isa_40:8). This is a prayer for

a change in the heart and mind of the servant of God, so that the word of the Lord would be established in them.

i. Establish Your word to Your servant is much the same idea as what Mary to Gabriel regarding the word of the Lord that he brought to her: Let it be to me according to your word (Luk_1:38).

b. Turn away my reproach which I dread, for Your judgments are good: While declaring the goodness of God's judgments, the Psalmist also prayed that his disgrace (reproach) would be turned away by the merciful God.

i. There is some reproach [disgrace] that we face as faithful followers of Jesus. Paul suffered this kind of reproaches (1Ti_4:10) and indeed even took pleasure in them (2Co_12:10). This kind of reproach we expect and receive as followers of Jesus (Heb_13:13, 1Pe_4:14).

ii. "The Lord's grace to him will remove disgrace and will promote the fear of God." (VanGemeren)

iii. "Cover it, cure it, suffer it not to break forth, to my disgrace among men." (Trapp)

c. I long for Your precepts; revive me in Your righteousness: Again the Psalmist prays for revival. The prayer comes from a heart that loves God's word (Your precepts), asking to be made alive in the righteousness of God.

F. Vav i: Liberty Comes from Loving God's Word.

"This commences a new portion of the Psalm, in which each verse begins with the letter Vau, or v. There are almost no words in Hebrew that begin with this letter, which is properly a conjunction, and hence in each of the verses in this

section the beginning of the verse is in the original a conjunction – vau.” (Barnes, cited in Spurgeon)

1. (Psa_119:41-42) Receiving from God and defending against man. Let Your mercies come also to me, O Lord – Your salvation according to Your word.

So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me, For I trust in Your word.

a. Let Your mercies come ... Your salvation according to Your word: Here the Psalmist acknowledged that mercy and salvation come from God to man through the Word of God. The word of God doesn't merely point us towards mercy and salvation, as if it were a self-help book. It actually brings mercy and salvation to us.

i. The Psalmist rightly said mercies, in the plural. God's gracious mercy to us is so great that it can only be described in the plural, with mercy piled on top of mercy.

ii. “He desires mercy as well as teaching, for he was guilty as well as ignorant.” (Spurgeon)

· · He needed mercy, not only teaching.

· · He needed many mercies, so the request is in the plural.

· · He needed mercy from God more than from man, so the request is made to God.

iii. The ancient Hebrew word here translated mercies is *hesed*. For centuries it was translated with words like mercy, kindness, and love. But in 1927, a scholar named Nelson Glueck (among others) argued that the real idea behind *hesed* was “covenant loyalty” and not so much love or mercy. However, many disagreed and there is no good reason for changing the long-held understanding of *hesed*

and taking it as a word that mainly emphasizes covenant loyalty (see R. Laird Harris on *hesed* in the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament).

iv. "It must come to me; or I shall never come to it."
(Bridges)

b. So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me, for I trust in Your word: Trust in God's word gives an answer to those who reproach us. The disapproving voices we often hear can be answered by our abiding trust in the approval that the believer finds in God.

i. When we believe who God is and what He has done for us in Jesus Christ, the disapproval of this world is answered.

ii. "The prayer of Act_4:29, 'to speak thy word with all boldness', is not only anticipated here (Psa_119:42 f., Psa_119:46) but put in context; for the word spoken is first of all the word appropriated (Psa_119:41), trusted (Psa_119:42 b, Psa_119:43 b), obeyed (Psa_119:44), sought (Psa_119:45) and loved (Psa_119:47 f)." (Kidner)

2. (Psa_119:43-44) A prayer that the word of God would remain in the mouth of the Psalmist. And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,

For I have hoped in Your ordinances. So shall I keep Your law continually, Forever and ever.

a. Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth: This request is rooted in the understanding that it is only by the goodness and grace of God that His word does dwell with us. Therefore the prayer comes that it may continue so.

i. This is true for humanity in general; hypothetically, God might have created man yet never communicated with him by His word.

ii. Yet it is also true for the individual who is awakened and attentive to God's word. They are so because of the work of God in them, so it is wise and worthy to pray that it would remain so.

iii. It is true most of all for those who proclaim the word of God. "He who has once preached the gospel from his heart is filled with horror at the idea of being put out of the ministry; he will crave to be allowed a little share in the holy testimony, and will reckon his dumb Sabbaths to be days of banishment and punishment." (Spurgeon)

b. For I have hoped in Your ordinances: His past hope is the ground for his future expectation. He has hoped in the word of God (ordinances) in the past, and has not been disappointed.

c. So shall I keep Your law continually: The Psalmist wanted God's word to remain in his mouth so that he could keep God's law. It was to glorify God through obedience to His word, not any self-serving purpose.

3. (Psa_119:45-48) Loving the word that brings liberty. And I will walk at liberty,
For I seek Your precepts.

I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, And will not be ashamed.

And I will delight myself in Your commandments, Which I love.

My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, Which I love,

And I will meditate on Your statutes.

a. And I will walk at liberty: Having just spoken of the obedience that comes from having God's word within, now

the Psalmist testifies that this brings a life of liberty. Freedom comes through obedience and submission to God.

i. It is proven in life after life, in both the positive and the negative: Obedience and the pursuit of God's word and wisdom leads to liberty. Disobedience, rejection of God's word, and reliance upon one's own wisdom leads to bondage.

ii. "Saints find no bondage in sanctity. The Spirit of holiness is a free spirit; he sets men at liberty and enables them to resist every effort to bring them under subjection. The way of holiness is not a track for slaves, but the King's highway for freemen." (Spurgeon)

iii. For I seek Your precepts: "Certainly in this service David found the liberty of a king. The precepts of God were not forced upon him; for he sought them." (Bridges)

b. I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed: This is an example of the liberty just mentioned. To have the boldness and ability to speak freely of God and His great word before kings and the great men of this earth shows true liberty.

i. "This is part of his liberty; he is free from fear of the greatest, proudest, and most tyrannical of men." (Spurgeon)

c. And I will delight myself in Your commandments: That he set this in an "I will" statement shows that delighting in God's word is a choice, a matter of the will. The Psalmist didn't wait for a feeling of delight to ov
(Psa 120:1) Psalm 120

A song of ascents.2

In my distress I cried out

to the LORD and he answered me.

(Psa 120:2) I said,³ “O LORD, rescue me⁴ from those who lie with their lips⁵ and those who deceive with their tongue.⁶

(Psa 120:3) How will he severely punish you, you deceptive talker?⁷

(Psa 120:4) Here’s how!⁸ With the sharp arrows of warriors, with arrowheads forged over the hot coals.⁹

(Psa 120:5) How miserable I am!¹⁰ For I have lived temporarily¹¹ in Meshech; I have resided among the tents of Kedar.¹²

(Psa 120:6) For too long I have had to reside with those who hate¹³ peace.

(Psa 120:7) I am committed to peace,¹⁴ but when I speak, they want to make war.¹⁵

(Psa 121:1) Psalm 121¹

A song of ascents.²

I look up³ toward the hills.
From where⁴ does my help come?

(Psa 121:2) My help comes from the LORD,⁵ the Creator⁶ of heaven and earth!

(Psa 121:3) May he not allow your foot to slip!
May your protector⁷ not sleep!⁸

(Psa 121:4) Look! Israel’s protector⁹ does not sleep or slumber!

(Psa 121:5) The LORD is your protector;
the LORD is the shade at your right hand.

(Psa 121:6) The sun will not harm you by day, or the moon
by night.¹⁰

(Psa 121:7) The LORD will protect you from all harm;
he will protect your life.

(Psa 121:8) The LORD will protect you in all you do,¹¹ now
and forevermore.

(Psa 122:1) Psalm 122¹

A song of ascents,² by David.

I was glad because³ they said to me, “We will go to the
LORD’s temple.”

(Psa 122:2) Our feet are⁴ standing inside your gates, O
Jerusalem.

(Psa 122:3) Jerusalem⁵ is a city designed to accommodate
an assembly.⁶

(Psa 122:4) The tribes go up⁷ there,⁸ the tribes of the LORD,
where it is required that Israel
give thanks to the name of the LORD.⁹

(Psa 122:5) Indeed,¹⁰ the leaders sit¹¹ there on thrones
and make legal decisions, on the thrones of the house of
David.¹²

(Psa 122:6) Pray¹³ for the peace of Jerusalem!
May those who love her prosper!¹⁴

(Psa 122:7) May there be peace inside your defenses, and prosperity¹⁵ inside your fortresses!¹⁶

(Psa 122:8) For the sake of my brothers and my neighbors I will say, “May there be peace in you!”

(Psa 122:9) For the sake of the temple of the LORD our God I will pray for you to prosper.¹⁷

(Psa 123:1) Psalm 123¹

A song of ascents.²

I look up³ toward you,
the one enthroned⁴ in heaven.

(Psa 123:2) Look, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a female servant look to the hand of her mistress,⁵
so my eyes will look to the LORD, our God, until he shows us favor.

(Psa 123:3) Show us favor, O LORD, show us favor!
For we have had our fill of humiliation, and then some.⁶

(Psa 123:4) We have had our fill⁷
of the taunts of the self-assured, of the contempt of the proud.

(Psa 124:1) Psalm 124¹

A song of ascents,² by David.

“If the LORD had not been on our side” —
let Israel say this! —

(Psa 124:2) if the LORD had not been on our side, when men attacked us,³

(Psa 124:3) they would have swallowed us alive, when their anger raged against us.

(Psa 124:4) The water would have overpowered us;
the current⁴ would have overwhelmed⁵ us.⁶

(Psa 124:5) The raging water
would have overwhelmed us.⁷

(Psa 124:6) The LORD deserves praise,⁸
for⁹ he did not hand us over as prey to their teeth.

(Psa 124:7) We escaped with our lives,¹⁰ like a bird from a
hunter's snare.
The snare broke, and we escaped.

(Psa 124:8) Our deliverer is the LORD,¹¹ the Creator¹² of
heaven and earth.

(Psa 125:1) Psalm 125¹

A song of ascents.²

Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion;
it cannot be upended and will endure forever.

(Psa 125:2) As the mountains surround Jerusalem,³ so the
LORD surrounds his people,
now and forevermore.

(Psa 125:3) Indeed,⁴ the scepter of a wicked king⁵ will not
settle⁶ upon the allotted land of the godly.

Otherwise the godly might
do what is wrong.⁷

(Psa 125:4) Do good, O LORD, to those who are good, to the
morally upright!⁸

(Psa 125:5) As for those who are bent on traveling a sinful
path,⁹

may the LORD remove them,¹⁰ along with those who
behave wickedly!¹¹

May Israel experience peace!¹²

(Psa 126:1) Psalm 126¹

A song of ascents.²

When the LORD restored the well-being of Zion,³ we thought
we were dreaming.⁴

(Psa 126:2) At that time we laughed loudly and shouted for
joy.⁵

At that time the nations said,⁶

“The LORD has accomplished great things for these people.”

(Psa 126:3) The LORD did indeed accomplish great things
for us.

We were happy.

(Psa 126:4) O LORD, restore our well-being,
just as the streams in the arid south are replenished.⁷

(Psa 126:5) Those who shed tears as they plant
will shout for joy when they reap the harvest.⁸

(Psa 126:6) The one who weeps as he walks along, carrying
his bag⁹ of seed, will certainly come in with a shout of joy,
carrying his sheaves of grain.¹⁰

(Psa 127:1) Psalm 1271

A song of ascents,² by Solomon.

If the LORD does not build a house,³ then those who build it work in vain. If the LORD does not guard a city,⁴ then the watchman stands guard in vain.

(Psa 127:2) It is vain for you to rise early, come home late, and work so hard for your food.⁵ Yes,⁶ he can provide for those whom he loves even when they sleep.⁷

(Psa 127:3) Yes,⁸ sons⁹ are a gift from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward.

(Psa 127:4) Sons born during one's youth are like arrows in a warrior's hand.¹⁰

(Psa 127:5) How blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!

They will not be put to shame¹¹ when they confront¹² enemies at the city gate.

(Psa 128:1) Psalm 1281

A song of ascents.²

How blessed is every one of the LORD's loyal followers,³ each one who keeps his commands!⁴

(Psa 128:2) You⁵ will eat what you worked so hard to grow.⁶ You will be blessed and secure.⁷

(Psa 128:3) Your wife will be like a fruitful vine⁸ in the inner rooms of your house; your children⁹ will be like olive branches, as they sit all around your table.

(Psa 128:4) Yes indeed, the man who fears the LORD
will be blessed in this way.¹⁰

(Psa 128:5) May the LORD bless you¹¹ from Zion, that you
might see¹² Jerusalem¹³ prosper all the days of your life,
(Psa 128:6) and that you might see¹⁴ your grandchildren.¹⁵
May Israel experience peace!¹⁶
(Psa 129:1) Psalm 129¹

A song of ascents.²

“Since my youth they have often attacked me,” let Israel
say.

(Psa 129:2) “Since my youth they have often attacked me,
but they have not defeated me.

(Psa 129:3) The plowers plowed my back;
they made their furrows long.

(Psa 129:4) The LORD is just;
he cut the ropes of the wicked.”³

(Psa 129:5) May all who hate Zion
be humiliated and turned back!

(Psa 129:6) May they be like the grass on the rooftops which
withers before one can even pull it up,⁴

(Psa 129:7) which cannot fill the reaper’s hand,
or the lap of the one who gathers the grain!

(Psa 129:8) Those who pass by will not say,⁵
“May you experience the LORD’s blessing!
We pronounce a blessing on you in the name of the LORD.”

(Psa 130:1) Psalm 130¹

A song of ascents.²

From the deep water³ I cry out to you, O LORD. (Psa 130:2)

O Lord, listen to me!⁴

Pay attention to⁵ my plea for mercy!

(Psa 130:3) If you, O LORD, were to keep track of⁶ sins, O Lord, who could stand before you?⁷

(Psa 130:4) But⁸ you are willing to forgive,⁹ so that you might¹⁰ be honored.¹¹

(Psa 130:5) I rely on¹² the LORD,
I rely on him with my whole being;¹³
I wait for his assuring word.¹⁴

(Psa 130:6) I yearn for the Lord,¹⁵
more than watchmen do for the morning,
yes, more than watchmen do for the morning.¹⁶

(Psa 130:7) O Israel, hope in the LORD, for the LORD exhibits loyal love,¹⁷ and is more than willing to deliver.¹⁸

(Psa 130:8) He will deliver¹⁹ Israel
from all the consequences of their sins.²⁰

(Psa 131:1) Psalm 131¹

A song of ascents,² by David.

O LORD, my heart is not proud, nor do I have a haughty look.³

I do not have great aspirations,
or concern myself with things that are beyond me.⁴

(Psa 131:2) Indeed⁵ I am composed and quiet,⁶ like a young child carried by its mother;⁷
I am content like the young child I carry.⁸

(Psa 131:3) O Israel, hope in the LORD
now and forevermore!

(Psa 132:1) Psalm 132¹

A song of ascents.²

O LORD, for David's sake remember all his strenuous effort,³

(Psa 132:2) and how he made a vow to the LORD,
and swore an oath to the powerful ruler of Jacob.⁴

(Psa 132:3) He said,⁵ "I will not enter my own home,⁶ or get into my bed.⁷

(Psa 132:4) I will not allow my eyes to sleep, or my eyelids to slumber,

(Psa 132:5) until I find a place for the LORD,
a fine dwelling place⁸ for the powerful ruler of Jacob."⁹

(Psa 132:6) Look, we heard about it¹⁰ in Ephrathah,¹¹ we found it in the territory of Jaar.¹²

(Psa 132:7) Let us go to his dwelling place!
Let us worship¹³ before his footstool!

(Psa 132:8) Ascend, O LORD, to your resting place, you and the ark of your strength!

(Psa 132:9) May your priests be clothed with integrity!¹⁴
May your loyal followers shout for joy!

(Psa 132:10) For the sake of David, your servant, do not reject your chosen king!¹⁵

(Psa 132:11) The LORD made a reliable promise to David;¹⁶ he will not go back on his word.¹⁷

He said,¹⁸ "I will place one of your descendants¹⁹ on your throne.

(Psa 132:12) If your sons keep my covenant and the rules I teach them, their sons will also sit on your throne forever."

(Psa 132:13) Certainly²⁰ the LORD has chosen Zion; he decided to make it his home.²¹

(Psa 132:14) He said,²² "This will be my resting place forever; I will live here, for I have chosen it.²³

(Psa 132:15) I will abundantly supply what she needs;²⁴ I will give her poor all the food they need.²⁵

(Psa 132:16) I will protect her priests,²⁶ and her godly people will shout exuberantly.²⁷ (Psa 132:17) There I will make David strong;²⁸ I have determined that my chosen king's dynasty will continue.²⁹

(Psa 132:18) I will humiliate his enemies,³⁰ and his crown will shine.

(Psa 133:1) Psalm 133¹

A song of ascents,² by David.

Look! How good and how pleasant it is when brothers live together!³

(Psa 133:2) It is like fine oil poured on the head which flows down the beard⁴ — Aaron's beard, and then flows down his garments.⁵

(Psa 133:3) It is like the dew of Hermon,⁶ which flows down upon the hills of Zion.⁷ Indeed⁸ that is where the LORD has decreed a blessing will be available — eternal life.⁹

(Psa 134:1) Psalm 134¹

A song of ascents.²

Attention!³ Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who serve⁴ in the LORD's temple during the night.

(Psa 134:2) Lift your hands toward the sanctuary and praise the LORD!

(Psa 134:3) May the LORD, the Creator of heaven and earth, bless you⁵ from Zion!⁶

(Psa 135:1) Psalm 135¹

Praise the LORD!

Praise the name of the LORD!

Offer praise, you servants of the LORD,

(Psa 135:2) who serve² in the LORD's temple, in the courts of the temple of our God.

(Psa 135:3) Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good!
Sing praises to his name, for it is pleasant!³

(Psa 135:4) Indeed,⁴ the LORD has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel to be his special possession.⁵

(Psa 135:5) Yes,⁶ I know the LORD is great, and our Lord is superior to all gods.

(Psa 135:6) He does whatever he pleases in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all the ocean depths.

(Psa 135:7) He causes the clouds to arise from the end of the earth, makes lightning bolts accompany the rain, and brings the wind out of his storehouses.

(Psa 135:8) He struck down the firstborn of Egypt, including both men and animals.

(Psa 135:9) He performed awesome deeds⁷ and acts of judgment⁸ in your midst, O Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants.

(Psa 135:10) He defeated many nations, and killed mighty kings —

(Psa 135:11) Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.

(Psa 135:12) He gave their land as an inheritance, as an inheritance to Israel his people.

(Psa 135:13) O LORD, your name endures,⁹ your reputation, O LORD, lasts.¹⁰

(Psa 135:14) For the LORD vindicates¹¹ his people, and has compassion on his servants.¹²

(Psa 135:15) The nations' idols are made of silver and gold, they are man-made.¹³

(Psa 135:16) They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see,

(Psa 135:17) and ears, but cannot hear.

Indeed, they cannot breathe.¹⁴

(Psa 135:18) Those who make them will end up¹⁵ like them,
as will everyone who trusts in them.

(Psa 135:19) O family¹⁶ of Israel, praise the LORD!

O family of Aaron, praise the LORD!

(Psa 135:20) O family of Levi, praise the LORD!

You loyal followers¹⁷ of the LORD, praise the LORD!

(Psa 135:21) The LORD deserves praise in Zion¹⁸ —

he who dwells in Jerusalem.¹⁹

Praise the LORD!

(Psa 136:1) Psalm 136¹

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his loyal love
endures.²

(Psa 136:2) Give thanks to the God of gods, for his loyal love
endures.

(Psa 136:3) Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his loyal love
endures,

(Psa 136:4) to the one who performs magnificent, amazing
deeds all by himself, for his loyal love endures,

(Psa 136:5) to the one who used wisdom to make the
heavens, for his loyal love endures,

(Psa 136:6) to the one who spread out the earth over the
water, for his loyal love endures,

(Psa 136:7) to the one who made the great lights, for his
loyal love endures,

(Psa 136:8) the sun to rule by day, for his loyal love endures,

(Psa 136:9) the moon and stars to rule by night, for his loyal
love endures,

(Psa 136:10) to the one who struck down the firstborn of Egypt, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:11) and led Israel out from their midst, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:12) with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:13) to the one who divided³ the Red Sea⁴ in two,⁵ for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:14) and led Israel through its midst, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:15) and tossed⁶ Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:16) to the one who led his people through the wilderness, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:17) to the one who struck down great kings, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:18) and killed powerful kings, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:19) Sihon, king of the Amorites, for his loyal love endures, (Psa 136:20) Og, king of Bashan, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:21) and gave their land as an inheritance, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:22) as an inheritance to Israel his servant, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:23) to the one who remembered us when we were down,⁷ for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:24) and snatched us away from our enemies, for his loyal love endures,
(Psa 136:25) to the one who gives food to all living things,⁸ for his loyal love endures.

(Psa 136:26) Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his loyal love endures!

(Psa 137:1) Psalm 137

By the rivers of Babylon we sit down and weep² when we remember Zion.

(Psa 137:2) On the poplars in her midst we hang our harps,
(Psa 137:3) for there our captors ask us to compose songs;³
those who mock us demand that we be happy, saying:⁴
“Sing for us a song about Zion!”⁵

(Psa 137:4) How can we sing a song to the LORD
in a foreign land?

(Psa 137:5) If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand
be crippled!⁶

(Psa 137:6) May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I
do not remember you, and do not give Jerusalem priority
over whatever gives me the most joy.⁷

(Psa 137:7) Remember, O LORD, what the Edomites did on
the day Jerusalem fell.⁸
They said, “Tear it down, tear it down,⁹ right to its very
foundation!”

(Psa 137:8) O daughter Babylon, soon to be devastated!¹⁰
How blessed will be the one who repays you for what you
dished out to us!¹¹

(Psa 137:9) How blessed will be the one who grabs your
babies and smashes them on a rock!¹²

(Psa 138:1) Psalm 138¹

By David.

I will give you thanks with all my heart;
before the heavenly assembly² I will sing praises to you.

(Psa 138:2) I will bow down toward your holy temple, and give thanks to your name, because of your loyal love and faithfulness,
for you have exalted your promise above the entire sky.³

(Psa 138:3) When⁴ I cried out for help, you answered me.
You made me bold and energized me.⁵

(Psa 138:4) Let all the kings of the earth give thanks⁶ to you, O LORD, when they hear the words you speak.⁷

(Psa 138:5) Let them sing about the LORD's deeds,⁸ for the LORD's splendor is magnificent.⁹

(Psa 138:6) Though the LORD is exalted, he takes note of the lowly, and recognizes the proud from far away.

(Psa 138:7) Even when I must walk in the midst of danger,¹⁰ you revive me.
You oppose my angry enemies,¹¹ and your right hand delivers me.

(Psa 138:8) The LORD avenges me.¹²
O LORD, your loyal love endures.
Do not abandon those whom you have made!¹³
(Psa 139:1) Psalm 139¹

For the music director, a psalm of David.

O LORD, you examine me² and know.

(Psa 139:2) You know when I sit down and when I get up;
even from far away you understand my motives.

(Psa 139:3) You carefully observe me when I travel or when I lie down to rest;³ you are aware of everything I do.⁴

(Psa 139:4) Certainly⁵ my tongue does not frame a word without you, O LORD, being thoroughly aware of it.⁶

(Psa 139:5) You squeeze me in from behind and in front; you place your hand on me.

(Psa 139:6) Your knowledge is beyond my comprehension; it is so far beyond me, I am unable to fathom it.⁷

(Psa 139:7) Where can I go to escape your spirit?
Where can I flee to escape your presence?⁸

(Psa 139:8) If I were to ascend⁹ to heaven, you would be there.
If I were to sprawl out in Sheol, there you would be.¹⁰

(Psa 139:9) If I were to fly away¹¹ on the wings of the dawn,¹² and settle down on the other side¹³ of the sea,
(Psa 139:10) even there your hand would guide me, your right hand would grab hold of me.

(Psa 139:11) If I were to say, "Certainly the darkness will cover me,¹⁴ and the light will turn to night all around me,"¹⁵

(Psa 139:12) even the darkness is not too dark for you to see,¹⁶ and the night is as bright as¹⁷ day; darkness and light are the same to you.¹⁸

(Psa 139:13) Certainly¹⁹ you made my mind and heart;²⁰ you wove me together²¹ in my mother's womb.

(Psa 139:14) I will give you thanks because your deeds are awesome and amazing.²²
You knew me thoroughly;²³

(Psa 139:15) my bones were not hidden from you, when²⁴ I was made in secret and sewed together in the depths of the earth.²⁵

(Psa 139:16) Your eyes saw me when I was inside the womb.²⁶

All the days ordained for me were recorded in your scroll before one of them came into existence.²⁷

(Psa 139:17) How difficult it is for me to fathom your thoughts about me, O God!²⁸

How vast is their sum total!²⁹

(Psa 139:18) If I tried to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. Even if I finished counting them, I would still have to contend with you.³⁰

(Psa 139:19) If only³¹ you would kill the wicked, O God! Get away from me, you violent men!³²

(Psa 139:20) They³³ rebel against you³⁴ and act deceitfully;³⁵ your enemies lie.³⁶

(Psa 139:21) O LORD, do I not hate those who hate you, and despise those who oppose you?³⁷

(Psa 139:22) I absolutely hate them,³⁸ they have become my enemies!

(Psa 139:23) Examine me, and probe my thoughts!³⁹ Test me, and know my concerns!⁴⁰

(Psa 139:24) See if there is any idolatrous tendency⁴¹ in me, and lead me in the reliable ancient path!⁴²

(Psa 140:1) Psalm 140¹

For the music director; a psalm of David.

O LORD, rescue me from wicked men!²
Protect me from violent men,³

(Psa 140:2) who plan ways to harm me.⁴
All day long they stir up conflict.⁵

(Psa 140:3) Their tongues wound like a serpent;⁶
a viper's⁷ venom is behind⁸ their lips. (Selah)

(Psa 140:4) O LORD, shelter me from the power⁹ of the
wicked!
Protect me from violent men, who plan to knock me over.¹⁰

(Psa 140:5) Proud men hide a snare for me; evil men¹¹
spread a net by the path; they set traps for me. (Selah)
(Psa 140:6) I say to the LORD, "You are my God."
O LORD, pay attention to my plea for mercy!

(Psa 140:7) O sovereign LORD, my strong deliverer,¹² you
shield¹³ my head in the day of battle.

(Psa 140:8) O LORD, do not let the wicked have their way!¹⁴
Do not allow their¹⁵ plan to succeed when they attack!¹⁶
(Selah)

(Psa 140:9) As for the heads of those who surround me —
may the harm done by¹⁷ their lips overwhelm them!

(Psa 140:10) May he rain down¹⁸ fiery coals upon them!
May he throw them into the fire!
From bottomless pits they will not escape.¹⁹

(Psa 140:11) A slanderer²⁰ will not endure on²¹ the earth;
calamity will hunt down a violent man and strike him
down.²²

(Psa 140:12) I know²³ that the LORD defends the cause of the oppressed and vindicates the poor.²⁴

(Psa 140:13) Certainly the godly will give thanks to your name; the morally upright will live in your presence.

(Psa 141:1) Psalm 141

A psalm of David.

O LORD, I cry out to you. Come quickly to me! Pay attention to me when I cry out to you!

(Psa 141:2) May you accept my prayer like incense, my uplifted hands like the evening offering!²

(Psa 141:3) O LORD, place a guard on my mouth!
Protect the opening³ of my lips!⁴

(Psa 141:4) Do not let me have evil desires,⁵ or participate in sinful activities with men who behave wickedly.⁶
I will not eat their delicacies.⁷

(Psa 141:5) May the godly strike me in love and correct me!
May my head not refuse⁸ choice oil!⁹
Indeed, my prayer is a witness against their evil deeds.¹⁰

(Psa 141:6) They will be thrown down the side of a cliff by their judges.¹¹
They¹² will listen to my words, for they are pleasant.

(Psa 141:7) As when one plows and breaks up the soil,¹³ so our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

(Psa 141:8) Surely I am looking to you,¹⁴ O sovereign LORD.
In you I take shelter.

Do not expose me to danger!¹⁵

(Psa 141:9) Protect me from the snare they have laid for me,
and the traps the evildoers have set.¹⁶

(Psa 141:10) Let the wicked fall¹⁷ into their¹⁸ own nets,
while I escape.¹⁹

(Psa 142:1) Psalm 142¹

A well-written song² by David, when he was in the cave;³ a
prayer.

To the LORD I cry out;⁴
to the LORD I plead for mercy.⁵

(Psa 142:2) I pour out my lament before him; I tell him
about⁶ my troubles.

(Psa 142:3) Even when my strength leaves me,⁷ you watch
my footsteps.⁸

In the path where I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.

(Psa 142:4) Look to the right and see!

No one cares about me.⁹

I have nowhere to run;¹⁰

no one is concerned about my life.¹¹

(Psa 142:5) I cry out to you, O LORD; I say, "You are my
shelter, my security¹² in the land of the living."

(Psa 142:6) Listen to my cry for help, for I am in serious
trouble!¹³

Rescue me from those who chase me,
for they are stronger than I am.

(Psa 142:7) Free me¹⁴ from prison,
that I may give thanks to your name. Because of me the
godly will assemble,¹⁵ for you will vindicate me.¹⁶
(Psa 143:1) Psalm 143¹

A psalm of David.

O LORD, hear my prayer!
Pay attention to my plea for help!
Because of your faithfulness and justice, answer me!

(Psa 143:2) Do not sit in judgment on² your servant, for no
one alive is innocent before you.³

(Psa 143:3) Certainly⁴ my enemies⁵ chase me.
They smash me into the ground.⁶
They force me to live⁷ in dark regions,⁸ like those who have
been dead for ages.

(Psa 143:4) My strength leaves me;⁹
I am absolutely shocked.¹⁰

(Psa 143:5) I recall the old days;¹¹
I meditate on all you have done;
I reflect on your accomplishments.¹²

(Psa 143:6) I spread my hands out to you in prayer;¹³ my
soul thirsts for you in a parched¹⁴ land.¹⁵

(Psa 143:7) Answer me quickly, LORD!
My strength is fading.¹⁶
Do not reject me,¹⁷
or I will join¹⁸ those descending into the grave.¹⁹

(Psa 143:8) May I hear about your loyal love in the
morning,²⁰ for I trust in you.

Show me the way I should go,²¹ because I long for you.²²

(Psa 143:9) Rescue me from my enemies, O LORD!
I run to you for protection.²³

(Psa 143:10) Teach me to do what pleases you,²⁴ for you are
my God.
May your kind presence²⁵ lead me²⁶ into a level land.²⁷

(Psa 143:11) O LORD, for the sake of your reputation,²⁸
revive me!²⁹
Because of your justice, rescue me from trouble!³⁰

(Psa 143:12) As a demonstration of your loyal love,³¹
destroy my enemies!
Annihilate³² all who threaten my life,³³ for I am your
servant.

(Psa 144:1) Psalm 144¹

By David.

The LORD, my protector,² deserves praise³ —
the one who trains my hands for battle,⁴ and my fingers for
war,

(Psa 144:2) who loves me⁵ and is my stronghold, my
refuge⁶ and my deliverer, my shield and the one in whom I
take shelter,
who makes nations submit to me.⁷

(Psa 144:3) O LORD, of what importance is the human race,⁸
that you should notice them?
Of what importance is mankind,⁹ that you should be
concerned about them?¹⁰

(Psa 144:4) People¹¹ are like a vapor,
their days like a shadow that disappears.¹²

(Psa 144:5) O LORD, make the sky sink¹³ and come down!¹⁴

Touch the mountains and make them smolder!¹⁵

(Psa 144:6) Hurl lightning bolts and scatter them!

Shoot your arrows and rout them!¹⁶

(Psa 144:7) Reach down¹⁷ from above!

Grab me and rescue me from the surging water,¹⁸ from the power of foreigners,¹⁹

(Psa 144:8) who speak lies,
and make false promises.²⁰

(Psa 144:9) O God, I will sing a new song to you!

Accompanied by a ten-stringed instrument, I will sing praises to you,

(Psa 144:10) the one who delivers²¹ kings,
and rescued David his servant from a deadly²² sword.

(Psa 144:11) Grab me and rescue me from the power of foreigners,²³ who speak lies, and make false promises.²⁴

(Psa 144:12) Then²⁵ our sons will be like plants, that quickly grow to full size.²⁶

Our daughters will be like corner pillars,²⁷ carved like those in a palace.²⁸

(Psa 144:13) Our storehouses²⁹ will be full, providing all kinds of food.³⁰

Our sheep will multiply by the thousands
and fill³¹ our pastures.³²

(Psa 144:14) Our cattle will be weighted down with produce.³³

No one will break through our walls,
no one will be taken captive,
and there will be no terrified cries in our city squares.³⁴

(Psa 144:15) How blessed are the people who experience
these things!³⁵

How blessed are the people whose God is the LORD!

(Psa 145:1) Psalm 145¹

A psalm of praise, by David.

I will extol you, my God, O king!
I will praise your name continually!²

(Psa 145:2) Every day I will praise you!
I will praise your name continually!³

(Psa 145:3) The LORD is great and certainly worthy of
praise!
No one can fathom his greatness!⁴

(Psa 145:4) One generation will praise your deeds to
another, and tell about your mighty acts!⁵

(Psa 145:5) I will focus on your honor and majestic splendor,
and your amazing deeds!⁶

(Psa 145:6) They will proclaim⁷ the power of your awesome
acts!
I will declare your great deeds!

(Psa 145:7) They will talk about the fame of your great
kindness,⁸ and sing about your justice.⁹

(Psa 145:8) The LORD is merciful and compassionate;
he is patient¹⁰ and demonstrates great loyal love.¹¹

(Psa 145:9) The LORD is good to all,
and has compassion on all he has made.¹²

(Psa 145:10) All he has made will give thanks to the LORD.
Your loyal followers will praise you.

(Psa 145:11) They will proclaim the splendor of your
kingdom; they will tell about your power,

(Psa 145:12) so that mankind¹³ might acknowledge your
mighty acts, and the majestic splendor of your kingdom.

(Psa 145:13) Your kingdom is an eternal kingdom,¹⁴
and your dominion endures through all generations.

(Psa 145:14) ¹⁵ The LORD supports all who fall, and lifts up
all who are bent over.¹⁶

(Psa 145:15) Everything looks to you in anticipation,¹⁷
and you provide them with food on a regular basis.¹⁸

(Psa 145:16) You open your hand,
and fill every living thing with the food they desire.¹⁹

(Psa 145:17) The LORD is just in all his actions,²⁰ and
exhibits love in all he does.²¹

(Psa 145:18) The LORD is near all who cry out to him, all
who cry out to him sincerely.²²

(Psa 145:19) He satisfies the desire²³ of his loyal
followers;²⁴ he hears their cry for help and delivers them.

(Psa 145:20) The LORD protects those who love him, but he
destroys all the wicked.

(Psa 145:21) My mouth will praise the LORD.²⁵
Let all who live²⁶ praise his holy name forever!
(Psa 146:1) Psalm 146¹

Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD, O my soul!

(Psa 146:2) I will praise the LORD as long as I live!
I will sing praises to my God as long as I exist!

(Psa 146:3) Do not trust in princes,
or in human beings, who cannot deliver!²

(Psa 146:4) Their life's breath departs, they return to the
ground; on that day their plans die.³

(Psa 146:5) How blessed is the one whose helper is the God
of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,
(Psa 146:6) the one who made heaven and earth, the sea,
and all that is in them, who remains forever faithful,⁴

(Psa 146:7) vindicates the oppressed,⁵ and gives food to the
hungry.
The LORD releases the imprisoned.

(Psa 146:8) The LORD gives sight to the blind.
The LORD lifts up all who are bent over.⁶
The LORD loves the godly.

(Psa 146:9) The LORD protects those residing outside their
native land; he lifts up the fatherless and the widow,⁷ but he
opposes the wicked.⁸

(Psa 146:10) The LORD rules forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout the generations to come!⁹

Praise the LORD!
(Psa 147:1) Psalm 147

Praise the LORD,
for it is good to sing praises to our God! Yes,² praise is
pleasant and appropriate!

(Psa 147:2) The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem,³ and gathers the
exiles of Israel.

(Psa 147:3) He heals⁴ the brokenhearted, and bandages
their wounds.

(Psa 147:4) He counts the number of the stars;
he names all of them.

(Psa 147:5) Our Lord is great and has awesome power;⁵
there is no limit to his wisdom.⁶

(Psa 147:6) The LORD lifts up the oppressed, but knocks⁷
the wicked to the ground.

(Psa 147:7) Offer to the LORD a song of thanks!⁸
Sing praises to our God to the accompaniment of a harp!

(Psa 147:8) He covers⁹ the sky with clouds, provides the
earth with rain, and causes grass to grow on the hillsides.¹⁰

(Psa 147:9) He gives food to the animals,
and to the young ravens when they chirp.¹¹

(Psa 147:10) He is not enamored with the strength of a
horse, nor is he impressed by the warrior's strong legs.¹²

(Psa 147:11) The LORD takes delight in his faithful
followers,¹³ and in those who wait for his loyal love.

(Psa 147:12) Extol the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!

(Psa 147:13) For he makes the bars of your gates strong.
He blesses your children¹⁴ within you.

(Psa 147:14) He¹⁵ brings peace to your territory.¹⁶
He abundantly provides for you¹⁷ the best grain.

(Psa 147:15) He¹⁸ sends his command through the earth;¹⁹
swiftly his order reaches its destination.²⁰

(Psa 147:16) He sends the snow that is white like wool; he
spreads the frost that is white like ashes.²¹

(Psa 147:17) He throws his hailstones²² like crumbs.
Who can withstand the cold wind he sends?²³

(Psa 147:18) He then orders it all to melt;²⁴
he breathes on it,²⁵ and the water flows.

(Psa 147:19) He proclaims his word to Jacob, his statutes
and regulations to Israel.

(Psa 147:20) He has not done so with any other nation; they
are not aware of his regulations. Praise the LORD!

(Psa 148:1) Psalm 148¹

Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the sky! Praise him in the heavens!

(Psa 148:2) Praise him, all his angels!²
Praise him, all his heavenly assembly!³

(Psa 148:3) Praise him, O sun and moon!
Praise him, all you shiny stars!⁴

(Psa 148:4) Praise him, O highest heaven, and you waters above the sky!⁵

(Psa 148:5) Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he gave the command and they came into existence.

(Psa 148:6) He established them so they would endure;⁶ he issued a decree that will not be revoked.⁷

(Psa 148:7) Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea creatures and all you ocean depths,

(Psa 148:8) O fire and hail, snow and clouds,⁸
O stormy wind that carries out his orders,⁹

(Psa 148:9) you mountains and all you hills, you fruit trees and all you cedars,

(Psa 148:10) you animals and all you cattle, you creeping things and birds,

(Psa 148:11) you kings of the earth and all you nations, you princes and all you leaders¹⁰ on the earth,

(Psa 148:12) you young men and young women, you elderly, along with you children!

(Psa 148:13) Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty extends over the earth and sky.

(Psa 148:14) He has made his people victorious,¹¹ and given all his loyal followers reason to praise — the Israelites, the people who are close to him.¹²

Praise the LORD!

(Psa 149:1) Psalm 149¹

Praise the LORD!

Sing to the LORD a new song!
Praise him in the assembly of the godly!²

(Psa 149:2) Let Israel rejoice in their Creator!
Let the people³ of Zion delight in their king!⁴

(Psa 149:3) Let them praise his name with dancing!
Let them sing praises to him to the accompaniment of the
tambourine and harp!

(Psa 149:4) For the LORD takes delight in his people; he
exalts the oppressed by delivering them.⁵

(Psa 149:5) Let the godly rejoice because of their
vindication!⁶
Let them shout for joy upon their beds!⁷

(Psa 149:6) May they praise God
while they hold a two-edged sword in their hand,⁸

(Psa 149:7) in order to take⁹ revenge on the nations, and
punish foreigners.

(Psa 149:8) They bind¹⁰ their kings in chains, and their
nobles in iron shackles,

(Psa 149:9) and execute the judgment to which their
enemies¹¹ have been sentenced.¹²

All his loyal followers will be vindicated.¹³

Praise the LORD!

(Psa 150:1) Psalm 150¹

Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary!

Praise him in the sky, which testifies to his strength!²

(Psa 150:2) Praise him for his mighty acts!

Praise him for his surpassing greatness!

(Psa 150:3) Praise him with the blast of the horn!
Praise him with the lyre and the harp!

(Psa 150:4) Praise him with the tambourine and with
dancing!
Praise him with stringed instruments and the flute!

(Psa 150:5) Praise him with loud cymbals!
Praise him with clanging cymbals!

(Psa 150:6) Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!